May 26, 1997

THE NEW YORKER

Price $2.95

spiegelman

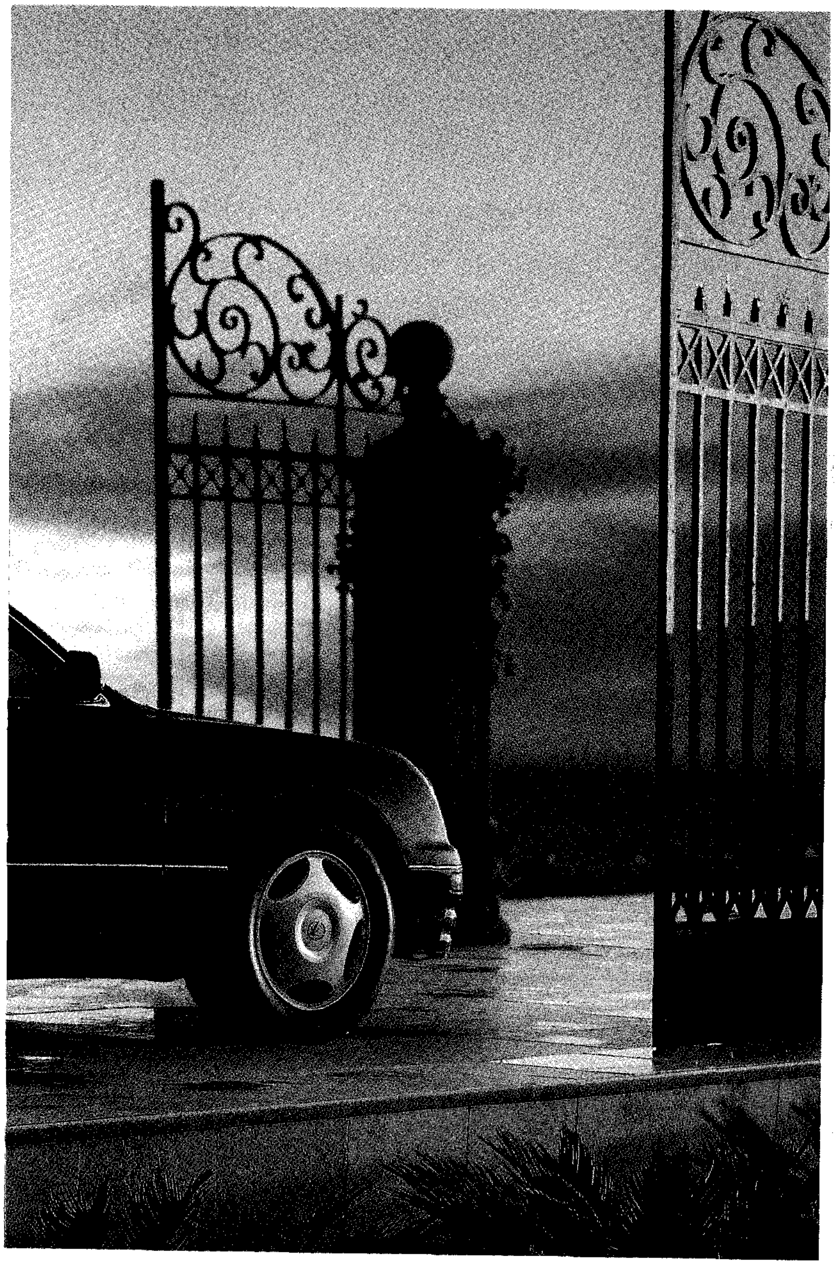
#BXBCMCJ********** 3-DIGIT 757
#LABA0R00099 8#690976 0X
NEWS
AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY JAN0598
ROY HAMMER LIB YEU1
PO BOX 111 #0835
BIG SANDY TX 75755-0111

Now You Can Order

LEXUS
LS 400

©1997 Lexus, A Division Of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Lexus reminds you to wear seatbelts, secure children in rear seat and obey all speed laws. ©1997 Coach. COACH and related trademarks are registered. *Coach leather seating surfaces. **Upon delivery of your

A Coach Bag Fully Loaded.



Introducing the ultimate leather accessory, the LS 400 Coach® Edition. Two of the most venerable symbols of luxury and sophistication, Lexus and Coach, have come together to create a motor vehicle that stands apart even in the elite circle of luxury automobiles. Its spacious interior is appointed luxuriously with Coach leather trim,* a power moonroof, an in-dash, six CD auto-changer, a custom shift knob and a driver's power memory system. The exterior features exclusive alloy wheels, champagne-pearl badging and a choice of selected colors. The finishing touch is a beautifully crafted, complimentary Coach leather Cabin Bag.** All of which, amazingly enough, are available at a substantial savings. Yet the one luxury we didn't include is that of time. We suggest that you act with dispatch because quantities are limited. For more details, please see your nearest Lexus dealer.

LEXUS
The Relentless Pursuit Of Perfection.

LS 400 Coach Edition, your Coach leather Cabin Bag will be shipped to you in 6-8 weeks. Specifications based on information at time of printing and subject to change without notice. For more information, visit us at www.lexus.com or call 800-USA-LEXUS (800-872-5398).

Cherries in winter, peaches in spring. It's not the weather that's changed, it's the packaging.

Every day, at 36,000 feet, a global exchange of sorts takes place.

Millions of freshly picked items crisscross the globe, many of them gently nestled in packaging's version of a first-class seat—a carton or container designed by International Paper.

Chilean grapes land in Marseilles.

California melons touch down in Warsaw.

Tuscan tomatoes arrive in Kyoto.

What helps them survive the trip?

Package design that anticipates reality: temperature swings, humidity, jostling, customs delays, curious spiders and the occasional 15-foot plunge from a cargo ship's hoist.

Packaging also has to be specific. Frozen chicken, fresh juice, fine china—each poses a very different challenge.

Last year alone, our engineers designed over 44,000 distinct kinds of packaging for businesses all over the world. And in a lab where we mimic the rigors of global travel, our packages are tested until they reveal their every strength and weakness.

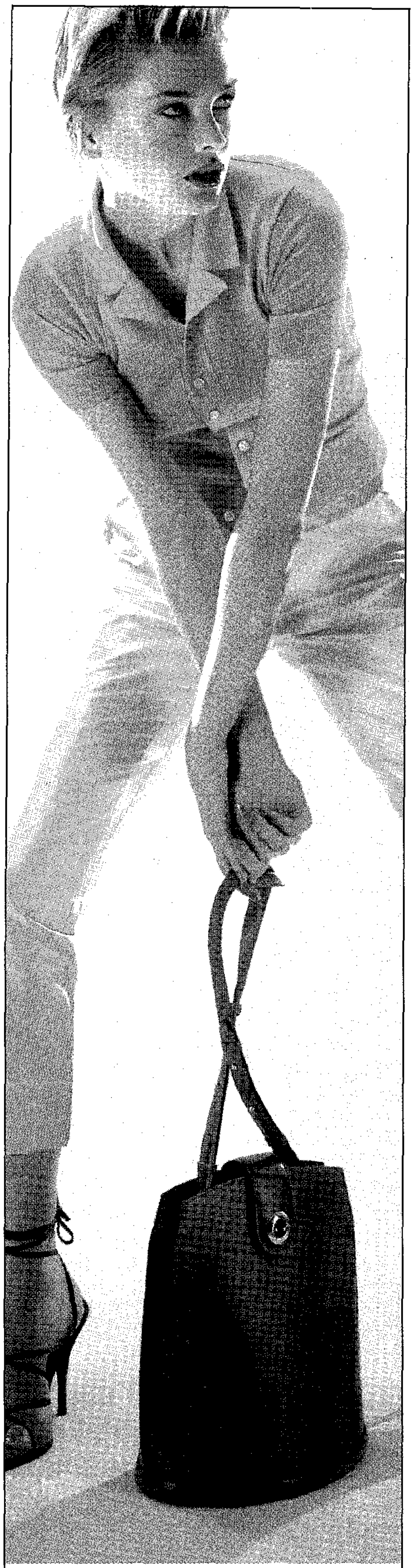
We do it for our customers, and for all of you who crave fresh, unbruised cherries in midwinter.

INTERNATIONAL PAPER

We answer to the world.

www.ipaper.com

©1997 International Paper.



LOUIS VUITTON
Epi leather

For information
call 1.800.458.7933

★EURO RSCG

AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

PO Box 111
Big Sandy, TX 75755

THE NEW YORKER

MAY 26, 1997

COMMENT The Artist Naked in a Cage . . . . *Don DeLillo* 6
In SoHo, in Kafka, and in China.

THE MAIL 8

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 12

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 29
Swede Levov lives; the battle in the viola section; it's your funeral; etc.

DEPARTMENTS

The Political Scene Solid-Gold Dish . . . . *Jane Mayer* 32
Why won't Regnery Publishing leave Bill Clinton alone?

Annals of Appearances Tales of a Beauty . . . . *Alison Rose* 37
For Francine, looking good was a way of life.

Personal History Water Babies . . . . *Oliver Sacks* 44
The boundless possibilities of being in the water.

A REPORTER AT LARGE After the Revolution . . . . *V. S. Naipaul* 46
What has happened in Iran since 1979? The author,
a witness to the first year of the Revolution, returns to
discover the frightening legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini.

THE CRITICS

Books The Clare Boothe Luce I knew . . . . *Gore Vidal* 70
Muriel Spark's "Reality and Dreams" . . . . *John Updike* 76
Postcard from Cannes . . . . *François-Marie Banier, Anthony Lane* 78
Musical Events Rock lyrics . . . . *Alex Ross* 85
The Current Cinema "Brassed Off," "The Van" . . . . *Anthony Lane* 88

POEMS

"Front Bar of the Lone Star" . . . . *Thom Gunn* 48
"A Gust" . . . . *Rachel Hadas* 64

SHOUTS & MURMURS The Potoroo Principle . . . . *Calvin Trillin* 90

COVER *Call 911-FILM, by Art Spiegelman*

DRAWINGS *Robert Mankoff, Lee Lorenz, Edward Frascino, Danny Shanahan, Leo Cullum, Stuart Leeds, Mick Stevens, Frank Cotham, Arnie Levin, Bill Woodman, Liza Donnelly, Robert Weber, Bruce Eric Kaplan*

THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for six combined issues: the last week of February and the first week of March, the last week of April and the first week of May, the last two weeks of June, the last week of August and the first week of September, the last two weeks of October, and the last two weeks of December) by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 20 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036. Vol. LXXIII, No. 13, May 26, 1997. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No.190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $39.95; two years, $72.00. In Canada, one year, $83.00 (includes G.S.T.). In Germany, one year, DM290. Mail orders to: IP Internationale Presse, Distribution & Marketing GmbH, Waldstr. 70, D-63128 Dietzenbach, Germany. Other foreign subscriptions, one year, $91.00, payable in advance.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80328-6447. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

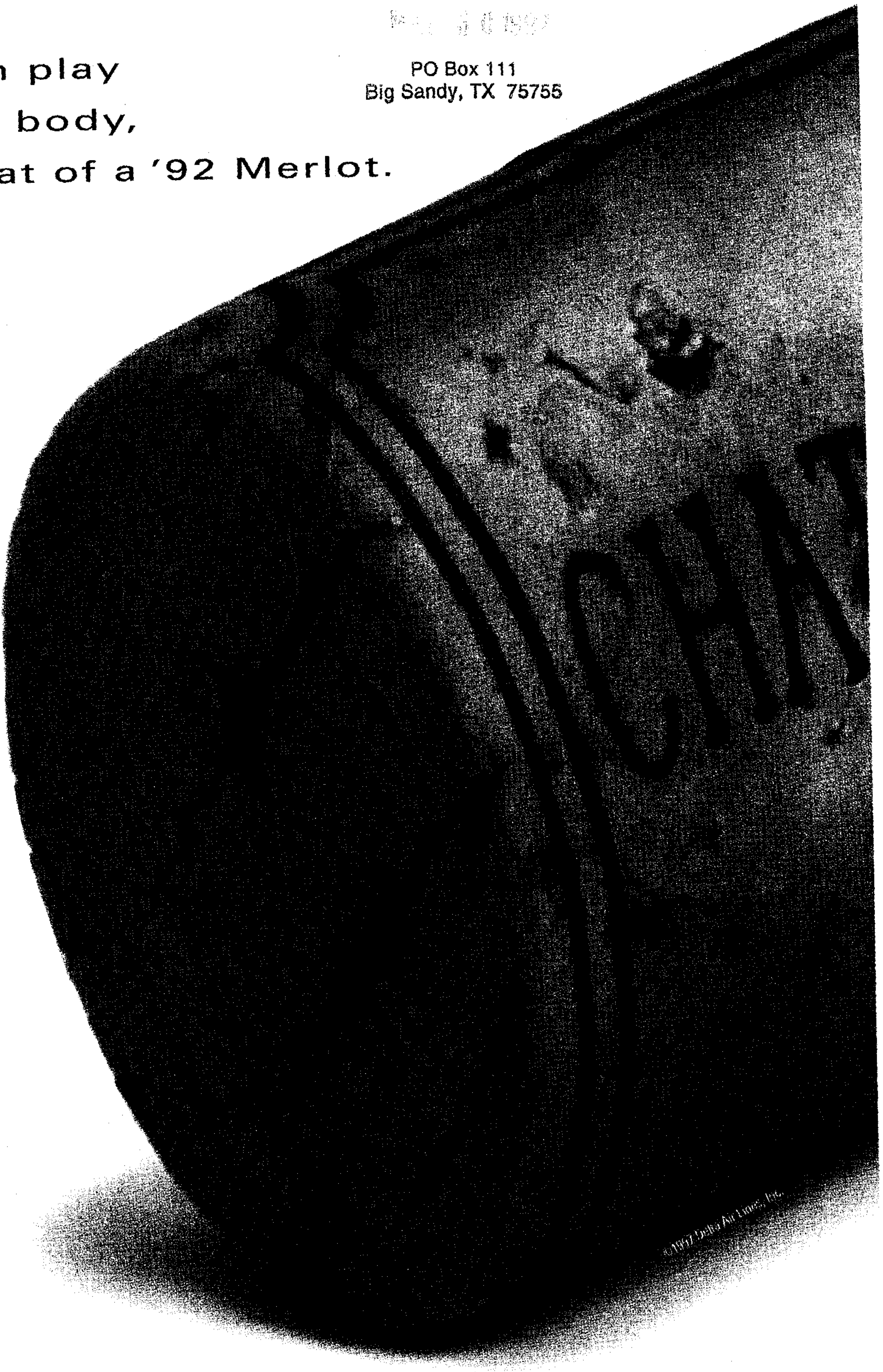
Delta Air Lines
ON TOP OF THE WORLD™

AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

[illegible]

PO Box 111
Big Sandy, TX 75755

Air travel can play havoc on the body, especially that of a '92 Merlot.



That's why we've selected the '93 Chateauneuf-du-Pape for your trip instead. Unlike the Merlot, this robust red passed our endless high altitude taste tests. It's just another way we're trying to make your traveling experience on the enhanced Delta Transatlantic Business Class as pleasurable as possible. Cheers.

ANNOUNCING *Upgraded Wine* ON DELTA'S ENHANCED BUSINESS CLASS.

She was selling lies.
He was living one.
Now, the truth is inescapable.

ALL SOULS' DAY

BILL MORRIS

a novel by the author of
Motor City

"The year is 1963 and the setting is Bangkok. The United States is on the brink of the Vietnam War and John Kennedy is in the White House. American innocence is about to be forever lost. This is a wonderfully **ATMOSPHERIC** novel that captures *time and place, an illumination* of a pivotal point in history. Bill Morris is an exceptionally gifted and savvy writer. The comparison to Graham Greene is fully merited."
— Nelson DeMille,
author of *Gold Coast*

"An angry, moving, **INGENIOUS** blend of fact and fiction about the early stages of the war in Vietnam.... Deeply moving, a persuasive vision of the greatest tragedy in our recent past."
– *Kirkus Reviews*

"A VIGOROUS, NIMBLE WRITER... Morris has the same gift John Updike displayed in his *Rabbit* novels, a gift for delineating his characters' inner lives while at the same time making their dilemmas emblematic of American impulses in American society at large."
— Michiko Kakutani,
The New York Times on *Motor City*

AT BOOKSTORES
EVERYWHERE

AVON
HARDCOVER
The Hearst Corporation
http://AvonBooks.com

COMMENT

THE ARTIST NAKED IN A CAGE

(An address delivered on May 13th at the New York Public Library's event "Stand In for Wei Jingsheng.")

1.

LAST month, there was a man in a cage in SoHo—a performance artist, Russian, impersonating a dog. He padded about on hands and knees, naked except for a thick collar, and he growled occasionally, took water from a bowl, and sniffed at his rubber lamb chop. It's possible that you've never really thought about dogs until you've seen a man seriously engaged in believing he is a dog. The cage had a small, barred slot where visitors to the gallery could get down on all fours, as a number of people were inclined to do, in order to talk to the dog, or whimper, as some did, or show the dog snapshots of their own dogs, speaking to him slowly and clearly, either because he was a foreigner or because he was a dog.

2.

In Kafka's story "A Hunger Artist," a man lives in a small cage for forty days and nights without eating. People pay admission to watch him starve, to gawk at his bony arms and bared ribs. The man has a manager, and the manager has placed a forty-day limit on the hunger artist's performance, not because the artist may die of starvation after this time but because the manager has calculated that this figure represents the far edge of the public's fickle interest.

3.

In China, somewhere, a writer lives in a small enclosure—a barred room, perhaps, or a dark hole with a slot for food. We can imagine that the writer has made and shaped his own fate. He has a name, Wei Jingsheng, and a history outside the charges and documents assembled by the state, and maybe he has an art outside the strict limits of the written word. In this sense, his high blood pressure and arthritis and depression, his dizzy spells and rotting gums may be seen as strong-willed symptoms of the artist's enduring effort to realize his role—a writer in opposition to the state.

4.

In a culture, ours, that tries to absorb and neutralize every threat to consumer consciousness, the spectacle of a man living as a dog has a kind of shifting eloquence. It offers a genuine sense of the latitude of free expression and places a small, incisive shock in the midst of all

THE NEW YORKER, 20 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036. Thomas A. Florio, president; Pamela Maffei McCarthy, senior vice-president/deputy editor; Carmen Lopez, vice-president/managing director; Peter S. Krieger, vice-president/managing director; David M. May, vice-president/managing director; Pamela H. Older, vice-president/manufacturing and information technology director; Peter Armour, vice-president/circulation director; Rhonda Pinzer Sherman, vice-president/special-projects director; Maurie Perl, vice-president/public-relations director; Robert A. Silverstone, vice-president/business manager; Richard Levine, vice-president/human-resources director; Jonathan Marder, vice-president/special marketing; Devereux Chatillon, vice-president/general counsel; Cindy Schreibman, sales development director; Marie Wolpert, marketing director. For advertising inquiries, please call Gretel Schneider, advertising director, at (212) 536-5400. THE NEW YORKER is not responsible for the return or loss of submissions, or for any damage or other injury to unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. Any submission of a manuscript or artwork must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope of appropriate size, bearing adequate return postage. The magazine does not consider unsolicited photographs or transparencies. © 1997 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of THE NEW YORKER. The periodical's name and logo, and the various titles and headings herein, are registered trademarks of Advance Magazine Publishers, Inc., published through its division The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE: To inquire about a subscription, to change an address, or to purchase a back issue, please write to THE NEW YORKER, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80328-6447, or telephone (800) 825-2510. Outside of North America, call (303) 678-0354. For a change of address, subscribers should give four weeks' notice. If possible, please send the address label from a recent issue.

those SoHo apparel shops and restaurants. But it also suggests the grim idea that the performance artist, liberated from Soviet state control, hair cropped, and dog collar secured, may be carrying his own culture's atavistic wish for order and repression.

5.

The Chinese writer's art is to be still—not silent but still. The writer's classic condition, to be alone in a room, has been cruelly extended here. Wei is a still figure, working out his fate in a confined space, refusing to eat at times, living for long periods on a teaspoon of sugar a day, dissolved in water. And, whirling around this stillness, there is something continuous and ponderous and vast—the perennial frenzy of the state.

6.

A real dog entered the gallery, a boxer, well trained, and the performance artist began to bark. He'd developed a strong, sharp bark, edged with warning. When an art critic entered his cage, in Sweden, the performance artist bit him.

7.

The total state wants to drain all conviction from the writer. It wants to absorb the dissident writer. In the West, every writer is absorbed, turned into breakfast food or canned laughter. But the more nearly total the state, the more vivid the dissident artist. The artist is so vivid and singular, so unassimilated into the state machine, that the state must find a way to make him disappear.

8.

In fact, the hunger artist in Kafka believes he can fast for more than forty days. He has taken his art to extreme limits. It is the tragedy of his life that he isn't allowed to stay hungry, that he is forced to come out of his cage and eat, in a public ceremony, with band music and attending physicians.

9.

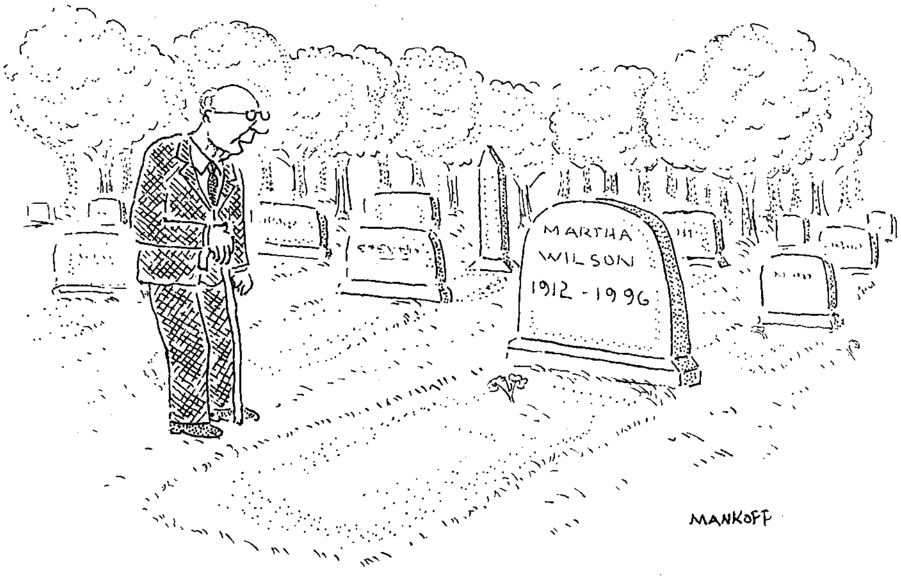
The Chinese writer is treated by police doctors. His cell is so cold that frost forms on the door. He suffers chest pains and can't sleep. The doctors address his symptoms in a traditional manner, by deciding they are faked. The writer stops eating again. A hunger strike is a free act, undictated by the authorities, and Wei starves himself to protest local conditions, of course, and to grow ever more still as well—the still, fixed center of that whirling frenzy.

10.

When the hunger artist dies, they decide to put an animal in his cage, a strong young creature equipped with sharp-pointed teeth that can rip meat clean off a bone. People come to watch the animal eat—an audience in far greater numbers than the hunger artist could ever command.

11.

The deeper they conceal him—the more remote the cell, the smaller the cell, the colder and stonier the walls of the cell—the more vivid and living is the writer. —DON DELILLO



"This is my last visit, Martha. I got the marriage posthumously annulled."

The first call a cancer patient makes should be to Cancer Treatment Centers of America™

Vickie Girard, former cancer patient

I was having trouble getting the kind of care that I wanted. Then I found out about Cancer Treatment Centers of America™. I went to one of their hospitals and was amazed at what I found there.

Doctors who took time to listen to me. Advanced medical treatment supported with nutrition-- diet planning, and vitamin and mineral supplements.

And the support of psychologists and counselors on staff who understand the emotional turmoil patients and their families go through.

I was encouraged to participate in my treatment. And when you're involved, you lose that helpless feeling, and the hopelessness that goes along with it.

Now I tell everyone who has cancer that the first call you should make is to Cancer Treatment Centers of America™.

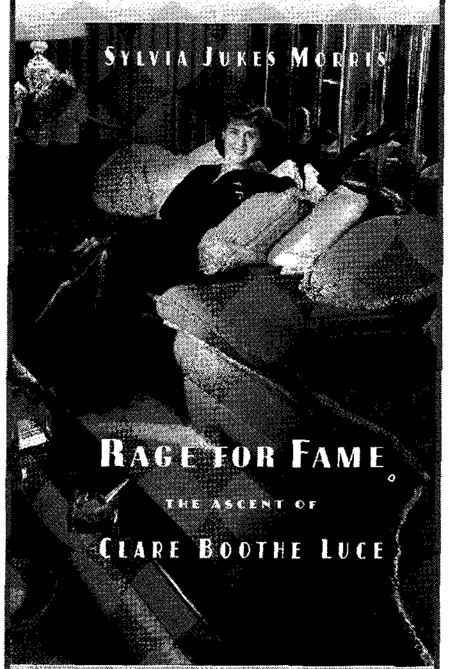
CANCER TREATMENT CENTERS® OF AMERICA

1-800-392-5055

http://www.cancercenter.com

No case is typical. You should not expect to experience these results.

THE SECRET STORY
BEHIND A VERY
PUBLIC LIFE



RAGE
FOR
FAME
THE ASCENT OF
CLARE BOOTHE
LUCE
SYLVIA JUKES MORRIS

A brilliant biography that reveals more than has ever been known about one of the most extraordinary women of our century. From her countless affairs with such luminaries as Bernard Baruch, Condé Nast and Henry Luce to her careers as *Vanity Fair* editor, renowned playwright and U.S. congresswoman, Clare Boothe Luce wanted everything. And got it.

"Her technique was simple: aim for the top."
—Helen Lawrenson

A Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club

RANDOM HOUSE
http://www.randomhouse.com/

THE MAIL

MILLIONS RUN AMOK

John Cassidy's Comment on overpaid C.E.O.s ("Gimme," April 21st) irresistibly reminds me of the worst excesses that preceded the French and the Russian Revolutions, so I am tempted to ask why there are no rumblings of proletarian revolt in this country. The answer, it seems, is that in a democracy any poor slob has the inalienable right to follow in the footsteps of the C.E.O.s, triumphing over his fellow-peasants in his lust, greed, and zeal to get to the top.

PETER DE ROME
New York City

We cannot stop C.E.O.s from rewarding themselves, but we can make the tax rate on income of more than half a million dollars a year ninety per cent, rather than the current 39.6 per cent. In the fifties, those in the top tax bracket did pay ninety per cent, and that money bankrolled the G.I. Bill and helped finance home loans; in short, it built the middle class. It also reduced the deficit caused by the Second World War. Now the money could be used to reduce the current budget deficit dramatically and also to pay rising Medicare and Medicaid costs. Would that be just? Well, who caused the deficit? It wasn't the poor or the middle class who scammed the savings and loans for a hundred and thirty-two billion dollars, or pressured Congress to appropriate funds for weapons that the Pentagon didn't want, or caused the environmental pollution that the government must clean up. It was the very rich, and they must pay for their depredations.

MARVIN MANDELL
West Roxbury, Mass.

My only regret is that C.E.O.s' compensation hasn't yet risen to a level that lets me enjoy some trickle-down. Millions aren't enough for that, but just wait until the gimmes reach the billions.

A. WILLIAM LARSON
Palm Beach Shores, Fla.

VOTERS' VALUES

"The Unforgiven," Edward Sorel's cover for the April 21st issue, showed three levels of torment in Hell for politicians who, respectively, promised to cut taxes, balance the budget, or both. I am looking forward to a similar cover showing the eternal punishment in store for those who, after voting for such politicians, complained when a favorite program was eliminated or reduced.

DAVID HAWKINS
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Adam Gopnik's comparison of Bill Clinton and Barney, the purple dinosaur with his own TV show (Paris Journal, April 21st), provokes me to predict that Gopnik's son's fixation on Barney will turn into an intense rejection of all things Barney, followed, in about four years, by a case of *nostalgie du dinosaure.*

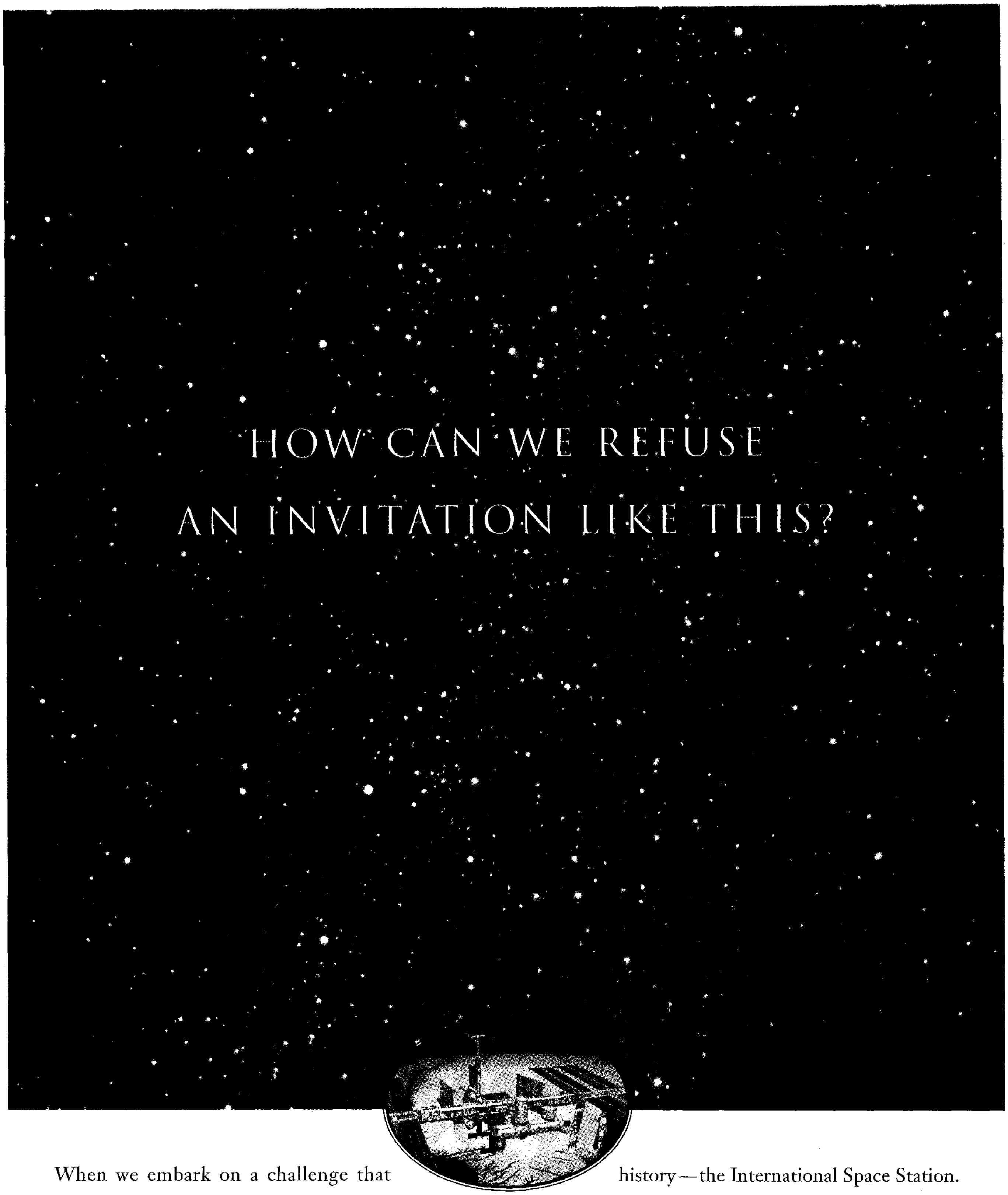
BETSEY WILLEFORD
South Miami, Fla.

PATHS TO HEAVEN

Why is the syllogism of Marshall Herff Applewhite and his followers "saddening" (The Talk of the Town, April 14th)? Isn't the Heaven's Gate logic—we believe in something we cannot see; there is no scientific evidence to support our belief, therefore let's ignore science—the very one on which the Judeo-Christian world was built? History has long supported "life innocent of empirical rigor," and science is indeed "a minority habit of mind"—blind belief is certainly not a product of the approaching millennium. People have died because of religious beliefs for centuries. It is difficult to understand the rituals of clean sneakers and odd haircuts, but is it fair to single out this particular sect for ridicule or pity? Which is the more saddening syllogism, a conviction that one should make haste to find out if there is evidence of another existence or a belief that paradise can be purchased in weekly installments?

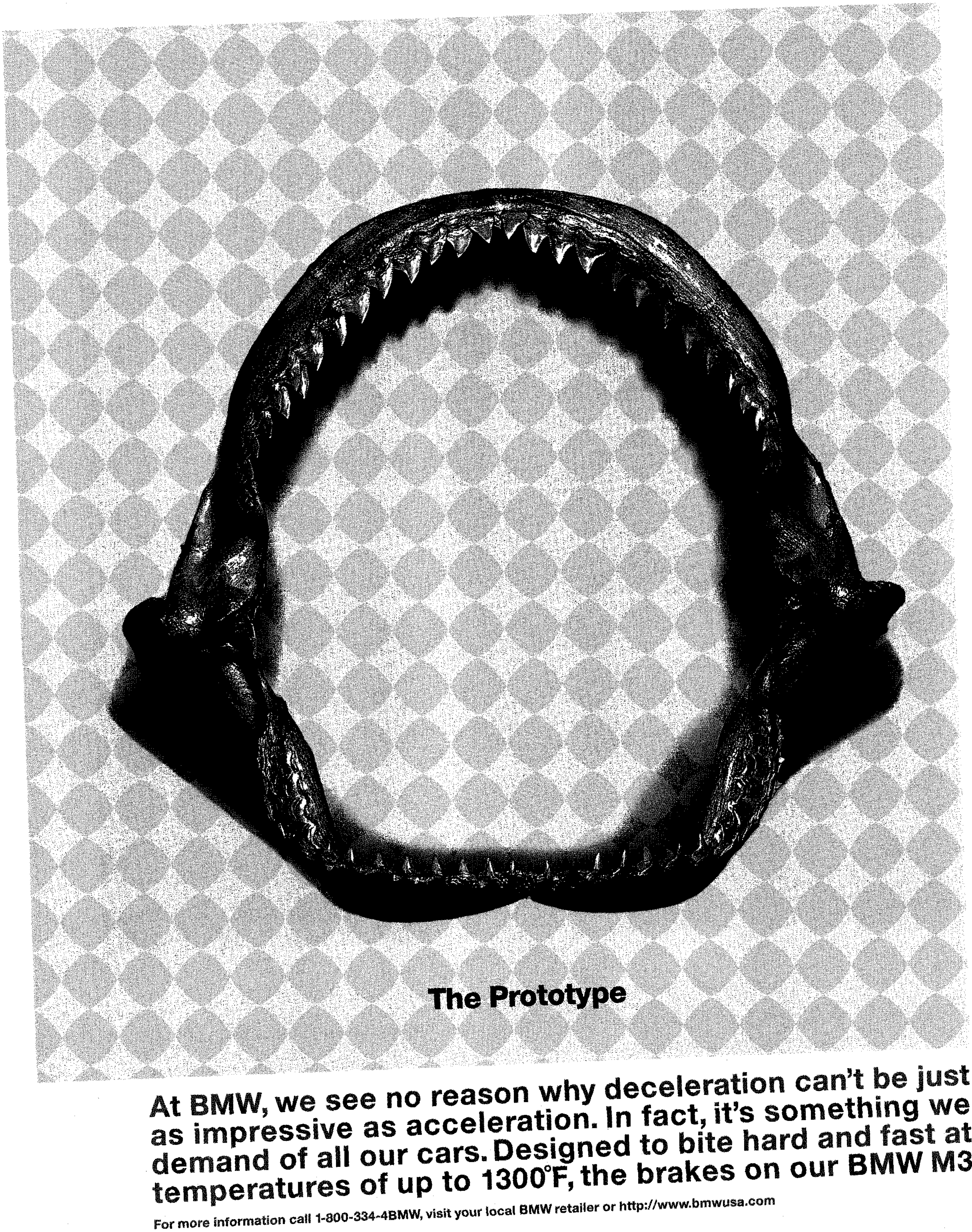
ELSA F. KRAMER
Indianapolis, Ind.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "The Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.



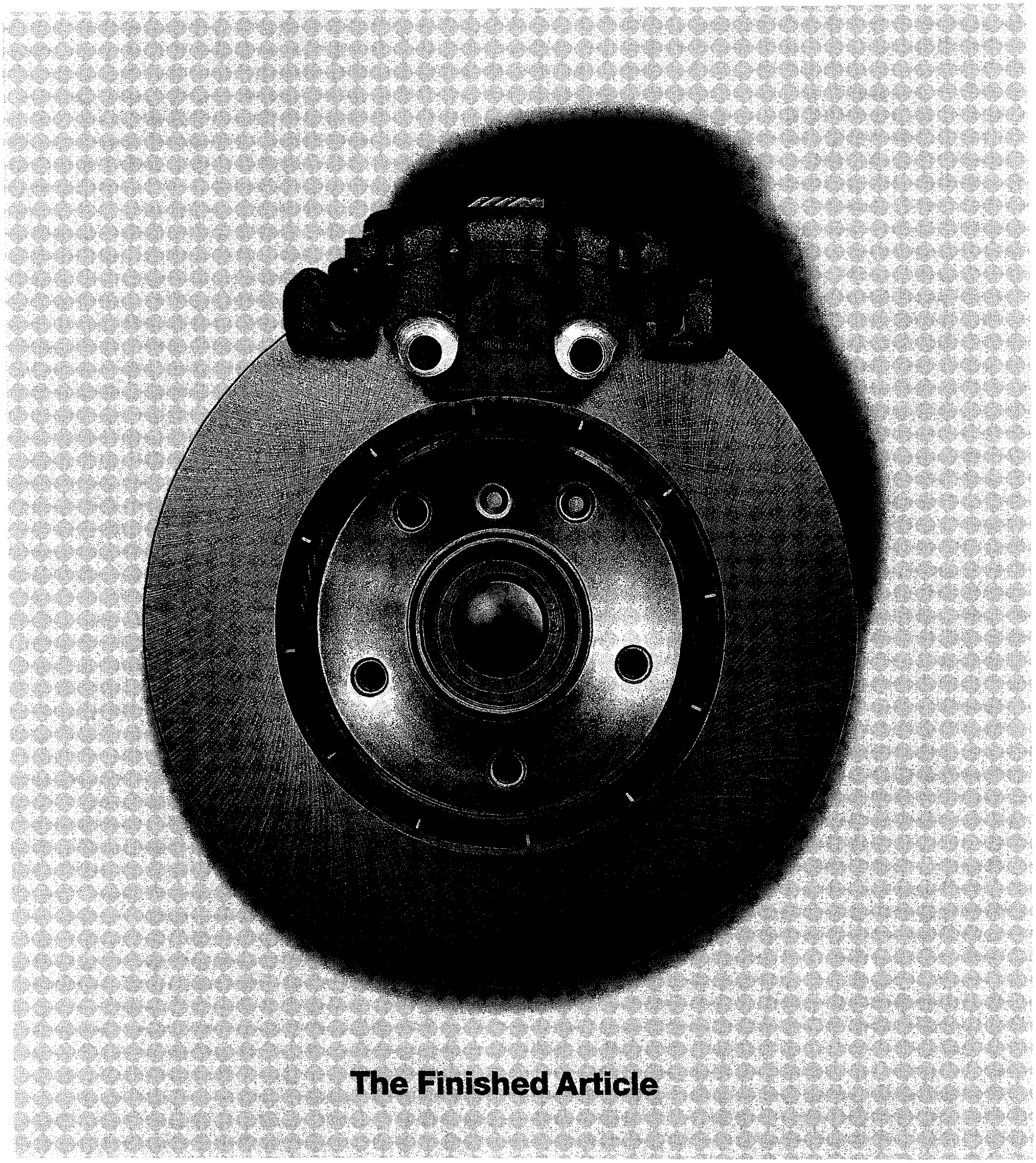
When we embark on a challenge that pushes us to the limit, we learn more than ever thought possible. Fact is, much of what we take for granted today, from the Internet to cancer treatments, comes from our space programs. We are now involved in the greatest endeavor in human history—the International Space Station. Fifteen nations working together to launch a home in space. What scientists will learn in the unique environment of micro-gravity, we can only begin to imagine. We do know the Space Station is about more than tomorrow, it's about life on Earth today.

BOEING



At BMW, we see no reason why deceleration can't be just as impressive as acceleration. In fact, it's something we demand of all our cars. Designed to bite hard and fast at temperatures of up to 1300°F, the brakes on our BMW M3

For more information call 1-800-334-4BMW, visit your local BMW retailer or http://www.bmwusa.com



can take you from 62mph to a complete standstill in just 2.8 seconds. Grip enough to make even the jaws of a great white shark appear toothless by comparison.

The BMW name and logo are registered trademarks ©1997 BMW AG.

The Ultimate Driving Machine®

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Baby Anger—From Peter Hedges, a new comedy, starring Kristen Johnston and John Pankow as a pair of reluctant parents. Michael Mayer is the director. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Devils—Dostoyevsky's novel was the inspiration for Elizabeth Egloff's new play. Opens May 21 at 7 and runs through June 8. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

Going, Going, Gone—The first of three plays that will be presented over three weeks by the Saratoga International Theatre Institute is set at a cocktail party and examines the laws of physics. Directed by Anne Bogart. May 21-23 at 8 and May 24 at 2 and 8. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.)

Seeking the Genesis—A drama by Kia Corthron, about a single mother trying to raise two sons in an inner-city housing project. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

OPENED RECENTLY

All My Sons—The Roundabout Theatre Company presents Arthur Miller's 1947 drama. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

An American Daughter—In the latest installment of Wendy Wasserstein's continuing examination of American womanhood, a doctor (Kate Nelligan) undergoing confirmation hearings for the post of Surgeon General gets run through the wringer by the media. It's a moving, compelling drama that resonates beyond the feminist arena; the production is fine, the casting near-perfect, and the direction, by Daniel Sullivan, admirably sensitive. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Annie—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything is possible: no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the New York public. Directed by Martin Charnin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Barrymore—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmiked voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

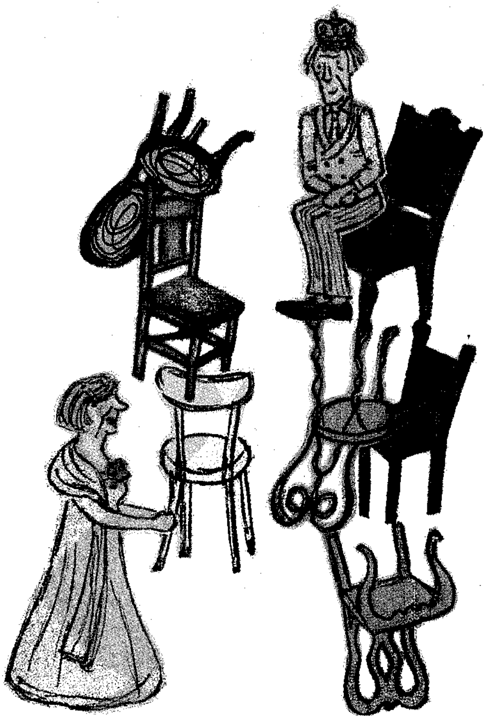
Beat: A Subway Cop's Comedy—John DiResta, New York City transit policeman and standup comic, files a report on his subterranean workplace. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes May 25.)

Bermuda Avenue Triangle—A sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renée Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Audience members unfamiliar with the husband-and-wife playwright-actors Bologna and Taylor may think they've stumbled into the couple's monthly fan-club meeting at this silly farce, which traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			21	22	23	24
25	26	27				

Bunny Bunny—In this comedy by Alan Zweibel (one of the original "Saturday Night Live" writers) about his friendship with Gilda Radner, who died of cancer in 1989, Paula Cale and the excellent Bruno Kirby are likable as the leads, but a young actor named Alan Tudyk, playing twenty-odd bit parts, steals the show. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200. Closes May 25.)

Candide—Spectacle substitutes for satire in this revival and revision of the 1956 Leonard Bernstein–Lillian Hellman–Richard Wilbur musical, directed by Hal Prince. The dishevelled book offers no emotional or thematic progression, and the metallic sound of the orchestra muddies the scintillating humor of Bernstein's score. Ultimately, the production drowns out all personality, with the exceptions of the expert Andrea Martin, who knows a laugh and how to get it, and Arte Johnson, a little comic who is large on charm. Also with Jim Dale, Jason Danieley, and Harolyn Blackwell. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/19/97.) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)



Marylouise Burke and Robert Hock, in Ionesco's "The Chairs."

CATHERINE LAZURE

Capitol Steps—A political revue performed by a troupe of former Congressional staff members. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

The Chairs—Ionesco's early absurdist farce, presented by the Pearl Theatre Company. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802. Closes June 1.)

Collected Stories—A drama by Donald Margulies, about an aging writer (Maria Tucci) and her talented protégée (Debra Messing). (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Corn—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company's revival of its 1972 musical, about the Hatfields and the McCoys. The talented cast is energetic and charming, but the book is weak, and the evening drags from time to time. (Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. 307-4100. Closes May 24.)

Curse of the Starving Class—Say what you will about Sam Shepard's rootless, aimless, broken-down families—but not until you see the Signature Theatre Company's keen production of his 1978 play. It's a rich experience, thanks in particular to Deborah Hedwall, as a mother who can no longer muster any motherliness, and Jude Ciccolella, as a mean, sad, but funny drunk of a father whose rants become soliloquies. A mostly fine supporting cast, a high-lonesome set, evocative lighting, and witty sound (a refrigerator so empty that it echoes) add the finishing touches. James Houghton directed. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200. Closes May 31.)

A Doll's House—A thrilling version of Ibsen's play, imported from the West End. Anthony Page's scrupulous, sensitive direction catches all the music and irony in the collusion between Nora (masterfully played by Janet McTeer) and her husband, Torvald (the passionate Owen Teale). (4/14/97) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Dream—A train wreck of a tribute to the great lyricist Johnny Mercer, in which only the singer Margaret Whiting and the singing jazz guitarist John Pizzarelli get out alive. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

East of Eadie—Betty Bourne, of Bloolips, stars in a new drag comedy by Ray Dobbins. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Closes June 1.)

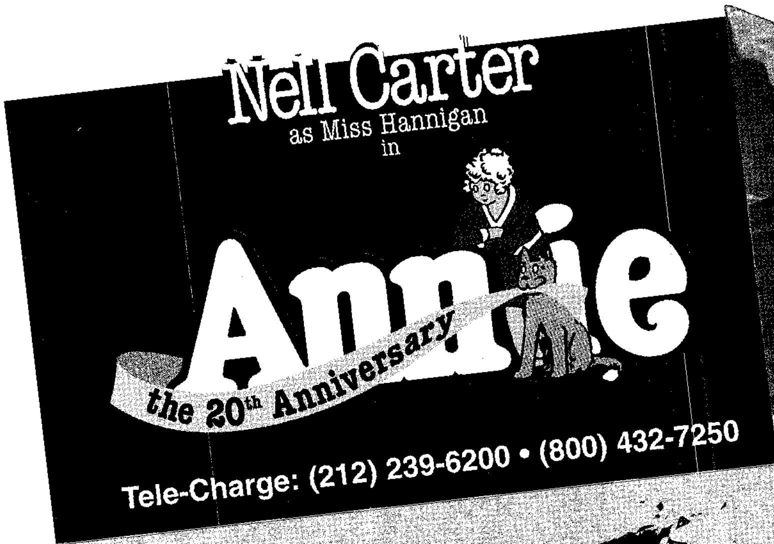
Ensemble Studio Theatre—Series B of this year's six-week marathon of one-acts begins May 21, with plays by Michael Weller, Julie McKee, Romulus Linney, and Michael Louis Wells. The marathon continues through June 15. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405.)

The Gin Game—Julie Harris and Charles Durning shine in the National Actors Theatre's funny, poignant revival of D. L. Coburn's 1977 play, about two elderly people who discover an antidote to their loneliness in a card game. Charles Nelson Reilly directed. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

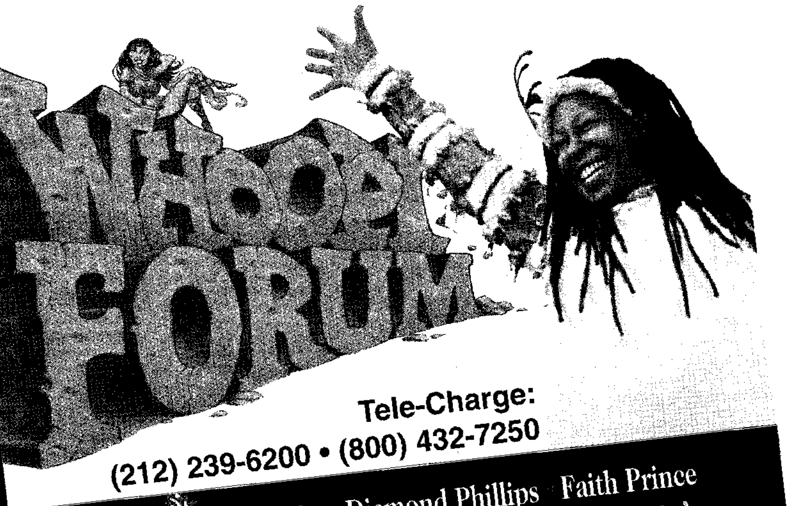
God's Heart—In his incoherent new play, Craig Lucas seems to be trying to say something about notions of loss and identity in a post-modern world, but he hasn't succeeded. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes May 25.)

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—A new play written and directed by Moisés Kaufman. (18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

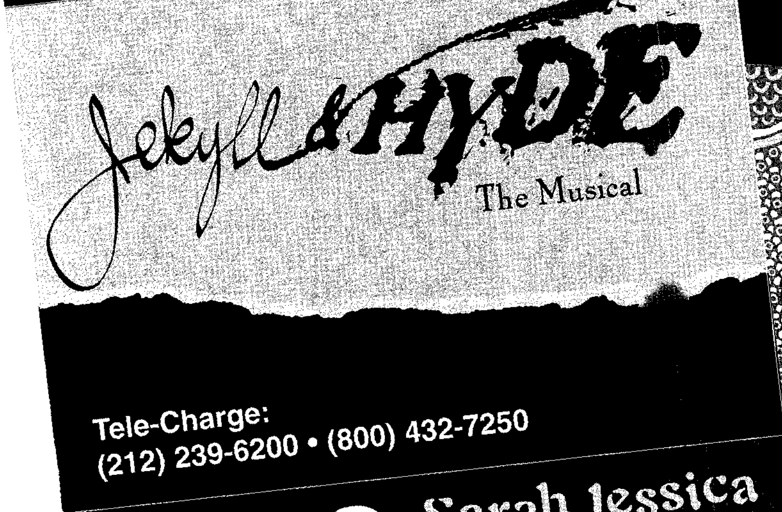
The Hairy Ape—In the Wooster Group's production of Eugene O'Neill's 1922 Expressionist drama, Willem Dafoe, who plays a stoker on an ocean liner, gives an astonishing performance that's both finely tuned and boiling


Nell Carter
as Miss Hannigan
in
Annie
the 20th Anniversary

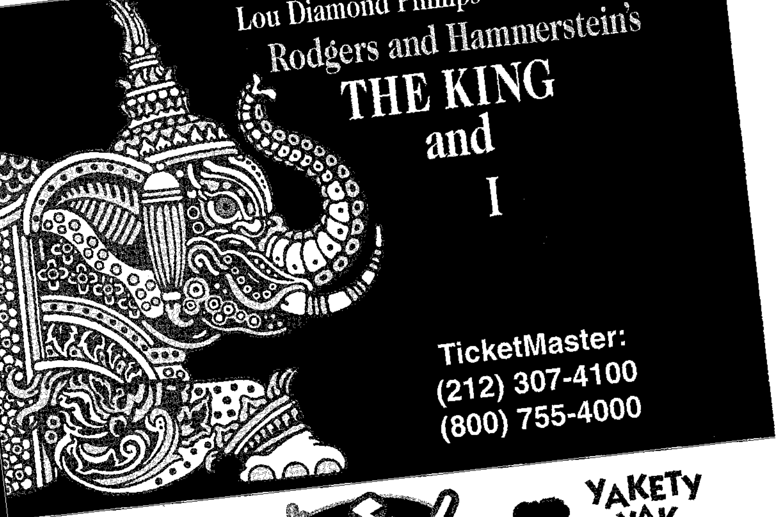
Tele-Charge: (212) 239-6200 • (800) 432-7250


Whoopi
FORUM

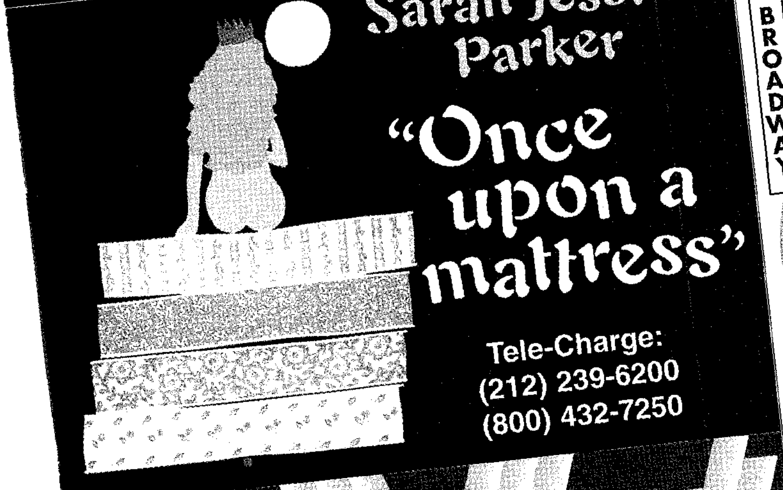
Tele-Charge:
(212) 239-6200 • (800) 432-7250


Jekyll & Hyde
The Musical

Tele-Charge:
(212) 239-6200 • (800) 432-7250


Lou Diamond Phillips Faith Prince
Rodgers and Hammerstein's
THE KING
and
I

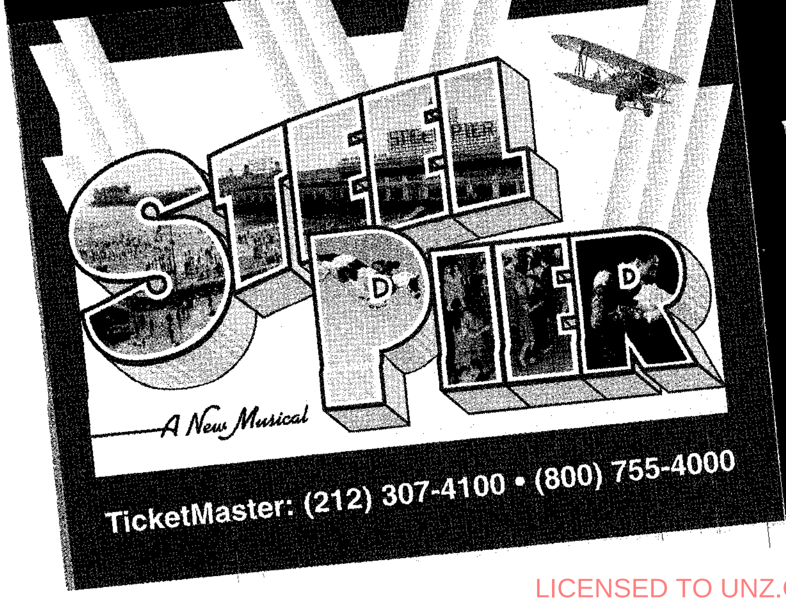
TicketMaster:
(212) 307-4100
(800) 755-4000


Sarah Jessica
Parker
"Once
upon a
mattress"

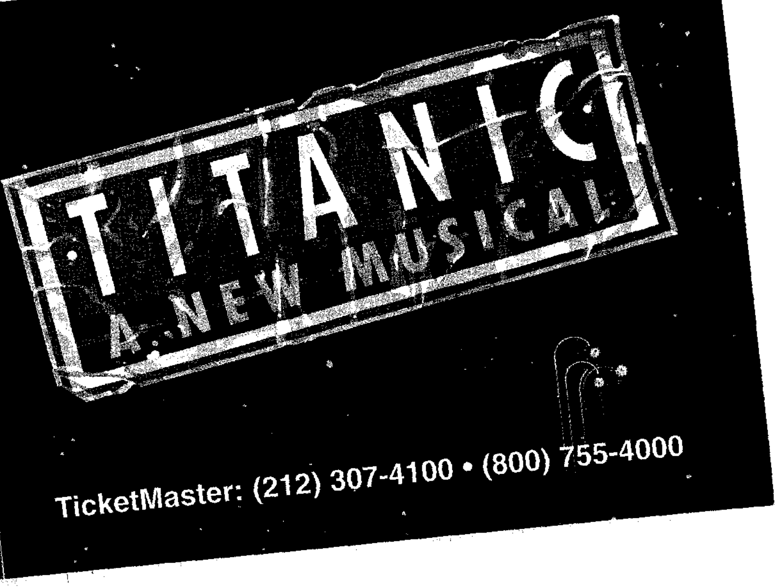
Tele-Charge:
(212) 239-6200
(800) 432-7250

ON BROADWAY
STAND BY ME
Smokey Joe's cafe
THE SONGS OF LEIBER AND STOLLER
YAKETY YAK
I'M A WOMAN
Love Potion #9
CHARLIE BROWN

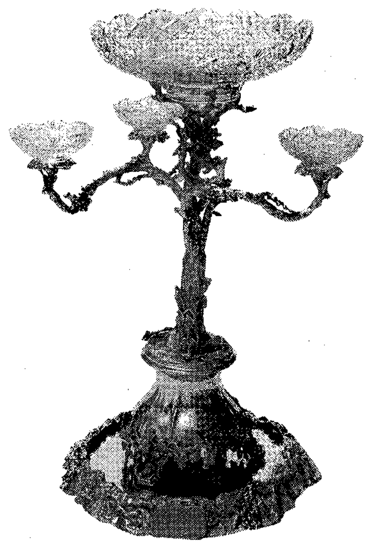
Tele-Charge:
(212) 239-6200
(800) 432-7250


STEEL PIER
A New Musical

TicketMaster: (212) 307-4100 • (800) 755-4000


TITANIC
A NEW MUSICAL

TicketMaster: (212) 307-4100 • (800) 755-4000

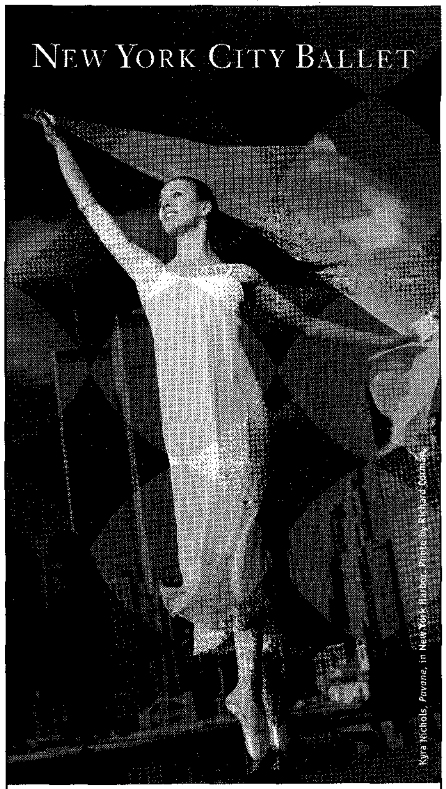


The Source for Antique and Estate Silver

Extravagantly designed...Victorian silverplate epergne with plateau, circa 1850. 28" high. $8,500.
From our collection of antique and estate jewelry.

fortunoff
the source®

681 Fifth Avenue at 54th Street, New York.
If you're interested in selling estate or antique pieces or for information call Michelle Amiel 212-758-6660.
Subject to prior sale. ©1997 Fortunoff


Kyra Nichols, *Pavane*, in New York Harbor. Photo by Richard Corman.

NEW YORK CITY BALLET

1997 Spring Season
at Lincoln Center
Now through June 29

For ticket information call
(212) 870-5570

over with raw, wild rage, and every element of the production contributes to its power. Elizabeth LeCompte directed. (Selwyn, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. Closes May 25.)

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Mary-Louise Parker) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (David Morse), is a clear-eyed marvel. (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Jekyll & Hyde—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel, with music by Frank Wildhorn and lyrics and a book by Leslie Bricusse. While there is much here to laugh at, the show exerts an undeniable pull, aided by the solid direction of Robin Phillips and the lovely voices of Linda Eder and Christiane Noll, who more than do justice to Wildhorn's melodies. Robert Cuccioli has the lead. (5/12/97) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

King David—More than ninety performers take the stage in this limited-run concert production of Alan Menken and Tim Rice's musical. (New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. Closes May 23.)

King of Rats—David Greenspan heads up the cast of Russian-born playwright Marina Shron's drama, about a family's sudden deterioration. (46 Walker Street Theatre. 560-7387. Closes June 7.)

La Mama—May 22-25 at 7: "Woyzeck '97," a contemporary version of Büchner's tragedy, by the Todd Theatre Troupe. . . . ¶ May 22-25 at 7:30: "Every Day Newt Burman," a Ridge Theatre revival of John Moran's techno-opera. . . . ¶ May 22-25 at 8: "The Fever," Wallace Shawn's 1990 monologue, performed by David Shapiro. . . . ¶ May 22-24 at 10: "Faith and Dancing: Mapping Femininity and Other Natural Disasters," an autobiographical solo piece by Lois Weaver. (74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Life—This new musical about the oldest profession in Times Square before it became known as the new Times Square (surely you remember all those singing hookers you used to pass on your way to the theatre) and the men who profit from its practitioners is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues, overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book—all from a group of theatrical veterans who should have known better. Cy Coleman wrote the music; Ira Gasman wrote the lyrics. The book is by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. Directorial blame goes to Michael Blakemore. The game cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

The Little Foxes—In Lillian Hellman's cunning dissection of greed and sexual politics, set in the New South in 1900, the Machiavellian Regina Hubbard shakes down her brothers, who are on the brink of a new business venture, for a larger piece of the family pie. Stockard Channing's Regina is a steely, intelligent woman, ravished both by money and by the momentum of the new industrial age. Regina seizes her life, as Hellman did, by playing according to the men's rules. While the rest of the casting in Jack O'Brien's production is uneven, the lineaments of the exciting chicanery and the fierce feminism underneath it come through. (5/19/97) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

London Assurance—Brian Bedford has the lead in Dion Boucicault's 1841 comedy. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Mabou Mines—At 7: "Hajj," a performance poem featuring Ruth Maleczech. Continues through June 1. . . . ¶ At 10: "A Prelude to Death in Venice," a new, puppetless version of Lee Breuer's 1980 play about a man trying to make a movie deal. Continues through May 31. (Toro Nada, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 473-1991.)

"London Assurance," at the Roundabout.

JULIA LICHT

Men on the Verge of a His-Panic Breakdown—Felix A. Pire, who has such fine stage presence that he makes even the costume and set changes interesting, brings a wacky improvisational spirit to his portrayal of six gay Latino immigrants, in a one-man show penned by Guillermo Reyes. Some of the characters (such as a Colombian "West Village kept boy over thirty" who has just been kicked out by his sugar daddy) seem to be hanging onto their American existence by a thread, but, make no mistake, *gringito*, these are tough, tenacious men: as Federico, a lovable recent arrival from Central America, says, "I'm here to stay. Get used to it." Joseph Megel directed. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 265-1086.)

Mere Mortals and Others—David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing," has lately changed his tune to "All in the Recycling": only two of the six short plays here are new. They are, however, Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and the two actors who play them, Anne O'Sullivan and Arnie Burton, are perfectly buggy. "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border, and Nancy Opel, woman of a hundred lunatic accents (she was simply terrific in "All in the Timing"), gives an inspired performance as a *loca* local and as a mad German doctor. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

Once Upon a Mattress—That modern madcap Sarah Jessica Parker shines as the princess in Gerald Gutierrez's revival of Mary Rodgers's silly, marshmallowy 1959 musical. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Steel Pier—John Kander and Fred Ebb's new musical takes place at a dance marathon in Atlantic City in 1933: it's a slick Depression fantasy with imagery and ideas that have long been overused in movies and television. Stale, hand-me-down authenticity also infects Susan Stroman's choreography and the plot, which revolves around a daredevil pilot (Daniel McDonald) and a sweet, innocent girl (Karen Ziemba) who is treated badly by her gold-digging husband (Gregory Harrison). (5/12/97) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

STONEWALL JACKSON'S HOUSE—Jonathan Reynolds's comedy hits all its targets—from multiculturalism to the misuses of history—with deadly aim, and the versatile cast is hilarious. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

TAP DOGS—Australia's work-booted tap troupe. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

TITANIC—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden vogage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments (and technical problems), it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter—the enormity of the disaster and its heartbreaking human details—and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Miraculously, the show steers clear of both the Scylla of camp and the Charybdis of bad taste, and the result is an evening that's both sombre and joyful, grave and entertaining. Richard Jones directed. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

WAITING FOR LEFTY—Clifford Odets' 1935 proletarian drama, set during a union meeting of desperate Depression-era taxi drivers, in a big-hearted, naturalistic staging by the Blue Light Theatre Company, under the direction of Joanne Woodward. It remains uneven, and it's easy to see it today as an agitprop museum piece. But the fine actors—especially Marisa Tomei and P J Brown—tap into its universal core: the desire for human dignity and the uplift of solidarity. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 279-4200. Closes May 25.)

THE WIZARD OF OZ—Oh, my! Roseanne makes her stage début, as the Wicked Witch of the West, in a Madison Square Garden production. (307-4111. Closes June 1.)

THE YOUNG MAN FROM ATLANTA—Horton Foote's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, set in Houston in 1950, with powerful performances by Rip Torn and Shirley Knight, as a couple whose only child killed himself six months earlier. The wife won't face the issue of suicide; the husband won't face the issue of homosexuality. The audience gets the point within the first ten minutes and then spends the next two hours waiting for the light to come on in the couple's befogged minds. Robert Falls is the director. (4/14/97) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599. . . . **FULL GALLOP:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JOSEPH GABRIEL: MAGIC ON BROADWAY:** Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **MASTER CLASS:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **ROB BECKER'S DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 307-4100. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200. . . . **VICTOR/VICTORIA:** Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.

IMPORTED
BELVEDERE
VODKA
IMPORTED
na zdrowie ®

You won't find Bogdan Szymanski at Yoshi's Café, but you will find his rye there.

Belvedere Vodka. Crafted from 100% Polish rye and distilled 4 times for a cool, complex character and creamy smoothness.

IMPORTED BY MILLENNIUM® IMPORT CO. MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA U.S.A.
100% neutral spirits distilled from rye grain 40% ALC./VOL. (80 Proof) ©1995 Millennium® Import Co.

Graphite Gray
Pearl White
NOW AVAILABLE IN TWO COLORS!
© 1997 Bose Corporation. Covered by patent rights issued and/or

Sound this big from a radio?

Not just big, but full, rich, and lifelike. It's the Bose® Wave® radio. Small enough to fit just about anywhere, yet its patented acoustic waveguide speaker technology enables it to fill your room with high-fidelity stereo sound. There's a credit card-sized remote control, too. You truly have to hear the Wave radio to believe it. It's available directly from Bose for just $349. Call us toll free, and find out just how big a radio can really sound.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

Ask about our interest-free six-month payment plan.

Please specify your color choice for the Wave radio: ☐Pearl White ☐Graphite Gray

Mr./Mrs./Ms.
Name (Please Print) Daytime Telephone ( ) Evening Telephone ( )
Address
City State Zip

Call 1-800-845-BOSE, ext. R4785

Or mail to: Bose Corporation, Dept. CDD-R4785, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168, or fax to 1-508-485-4577. Ask about FedEx® delivery. Installment payment plan option is not to be used in combination with any other offers. Price and/or payment plan are subject to change without notice.

DANCE

New York City Ballet—May 21 at 8: "Apollo," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Agon." . . . ¶ May 22 at 8: When Peter Martins, N.Y.C.B.'s ballet master in chief, first saw the work of Angelin Preljocaj, he headed backstage at the Théâtre Jean Vilar, outside Paris, and asked the choreographer, "Would you like to come choreograph for my company some day?" According to Martins, the answer was "What's your company?" As his recent Joyce season revealed, the quick-study choreographer likes to use stylistic conflict—modern versus classical, say, or noise versus music—for its inherent drama. For "La Stravaganza," his first work for City Ballet, Preljocaj has wisely selected twelve performers who could dance the phone book with flair, and cross-matched his musical choices with his dance styles, so that the classical team cavorts to noise by various contemporary composers, and the modernists to Vivaldi. The spring-gala performance also features "Ballo della Regina" and "Brandenburg." . . . ¶ May 23 at 8: "Mozartiana," "The Cage," "Other Dances," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ May 24 at 2: "La Source," "La Stravaganza," and "Brandenburg." . . . ¶ May 24 at 8: "Apollo," "The Cage," "Other Dances," and "Scotch Symphony." . . . ¶ May 25 at 3: "Interplay," "A Suite of Dances," "Barber Violin Concerto," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ May 27 at 8: "The Steadfast Tin Soldier," "Allegro Brillante," "Adams Violin Concerto," and "Scotch Symphony." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 29.)

American Ballet Theatre—May 21 at 2 and 8: "Cinderella." . . . ¶ May 22-23 and May 26-27 at 8, and May 24 at 2 and 8: The jewel in the tiara of the company's spring season is a new, long, and lavish "Othello." Lar Lubovitch, a romantically inclined (and versatile) choreographer, is trying for something old in the look of the production, especially in the Greco-Elizabethan costumes for the Moor and his bride, designed by Ann Hould-Ward. But he's also trying for something new, or at least new to these environs: the elimination of mime. He's telling a love story, all swoops and backbends and swoons, and, in a preview of the Act I pas de deux at A.B.T.'s spring gala, principals Desmond Richardson (a longtime Alvin Ailey dancer) and Sandra Brown looked nearly as much like *Romeo and Juliet* as like *Othello* and Desdemona. The score, by Elliot Goldenthal (whose works include the oratorio "Fire Water Paper" and the music for the films "Interview with the Vampire" and "Batman Forever"), is supportive and accommodating. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 5.)

Elisa Monte Dance—The seven-member company brings four guest artists and two programs, with repertory and newer works, all choreographed by Elisa Monte and David Brown. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 20 at 7:30, May 21-24 and May 27 at 8, and May 25 at 2 and 7:30. Through June 1.)

Dance Africa—In addition to putting together these programs, which he has done for the past two decades (this year he's booked more than twenty companies over three days), Chuck Davis also leads annual tours back to Africa, where dance, he says, "is still a part of life." He's mum about what, precisely, he and other dancers have learned there, but he promises that when you go to Africa with him, "you don't just sit on the veranda." In these programs, such companies as Dinizulu Dance, Djembe Orchestra, Chakaba, and DJoulé African carry on their traditions. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. May 23 at 7, May 24 at 3 and 8, and May 25 at 3 and 7.)

"Intimate Dances"—Elisa King and Dancers perform solos, duets, and trios, to scores by Bach, Scarlatti, and Tori Amos, among others. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 924-0077. May 21-24 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Crosby, Stills & Nash—Just a couple *more* songs before we go. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. May 21 at 8.)

The Offspring / L7—On its multiplatinum 1994 breakthrough LP, "Smash," this Orange County quartet showed a knack for contagious, skillfully arranged songs with funny, self-deprecating wordplay—not your garden-variety punks. The band's latest album, "Ixnay on the Hombre," offers more of the same with quieter chart action, so far. / Hard rock from America's toughest all-girl band. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. May 22 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—May 21: The Scottish band **CAPERCAILLIE** mixes traditional Gaelic songs with modern pop. May 23: **BUSTER POINDEXTER AND HIS BANSHEES OF BLUE.** May 24: The sophomoric high jinks of the **UNCLE FLOYD SHOW.** May 27: **JOHN WETTON,** former lead vocalist for King Crimson, Asia, and sundry other English progressive-rock leviathans. With the **NUDES,** the tallest duo in pop, who make beautiful, jazz-inflected folk music.

Elysian Fields, at Maxwell's and the Mercury Lounge.

TIM BOWER

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Dedicated to the music of the Windy City. May 23: Local singer and guitarist **JOHNNY ALLEN.** May 24: Roomful of Blues veteran saxman and vocalist **GREG PICCOLO.**

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. May 21: The excellent neo-folk duo **ONCE BLUE.** The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. May 21: **UNSANE** headlines an evening of ear-splitting hardcore. On May 22, that heady Chicago sound comes in: **TORTOISE** plays progressive rock with an indie flavor, while **ELEVENTH DREAM DAY** crafts brooding, textural indie rock (they were on Atlantic but now seem quite happy on home-town label Thrill Jockey) with a progressive flavor. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—May 21: The L.A. quartet **FAILURE** heads a fierce, guitar-heavy lineup that includes **POSTER CHILDREN** and **SUMMERCAMP.** May 22: Ultra-sweet, cutesy-pie Scottish pop with **BIS.**

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The Upper East Side blues. May 21: The guitar heroics of **HIRAM BULLOCK** and the bass grooves of his cohort **WILL LEE.** May 22: New Orleans singer-guitarist **WALTER (WOLFMAN) WASHINGTON.** May 23: Gotham's own rousing **SLAPMEAT JOHNSON AND THE TITANS.**

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-4064)—May 21: **ELYSIAN FIELDS.** Led by femme-fatale vocalist Jennifer Charles, a brooding beauty who looks like a cross between Juliette Lewis and Morticia Addams, this downtown combo plays what might best be described as erotic jazz.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—May 21: **MARK EITZEL, TUATARA,** and the **MINUS 5** finish up their three-night stand (see Tramps). May 23: **ELYSIAN FIELDS** floats over from Maxwell's.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. May 21: An evening of spoken-word splendor with **THE LAST POETS** and **SEKOU SUNDIATA.** May 26: Classic salsa by the **JOHNNY COLÓN** orchestra and the **JOE CUBA** sextet. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—May 22: Though the once-promising career of the **BRAND NEW HEAVIES** seems to have cooled somewhat, this U.K.-based hip-hop outfit still makes a breezy, accessible hybrid of smooth funk and contemporary jazz.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—May 21: Hot Tuna founder **JORMA KAUKONEN** performs on a bill with singer-songwriter **JOHN WESLEY HARDING,** a pop troubadour who's perpetually compared with Elvis Costello. May 23: Singer-songwriter **MARK EITZEL** remains one of our finest poets of tenderloin passion and despair. Though his Bay Area band, American Music Club, is no more, his solo gigs share the same unfashionable and eccentric sound. His latest album, "West," is a collaborative project with R.E.M. guitarist **PETER BUCK,** and the great man is slated to be onstage. **TUATARA,** an instrumental act featuring Buck and members of Pearl Jam and Screaming Trees, opens the show, along with the **MINUS 5,** comprising Buck, Eitzel's organist and bassist, **SCOTT MC CAUGHEY,** and drummer **BARRETT MARTIN.**

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **SUSANNAH MC CORKLE** is currently at work in the Oak Room. Dining.

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Through May 24: The **TOMMY FLANAGAN** trio. In his sixties, Flanagan now presides over all of jazz piano. Of a poetic cast, he unreels endlessly supple lines, paying them out at whatever speed they demand. May 25-27: **JOHN PATITUCCI** may be one of the most gifted bassists alive, but the fusionesque work he's noted for hasn't always presented him in the best light. Here, he's put together as serious a jazz band as you could wish for: drummer **PAUL MOTIAN,** saxophonist **CHRIS POTTER,** and pianist **ALAN PASQUA.** If mainstream respectability is what he's after, this should do the trick. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. Through May 25: In the early fifties, when singer **JON HENDRICKS** was a student at the University of Toledo Law School, Charlie Parker played a gig with him and offered the following words of wisdom: "You are not a lawyer, you are a jazz musician. Quit school and come to New York." The rest is history. Also on the bill are vocalist **CARRIE SMITH** and her trio. Dining.

TABLES FOR TWO

MI COCINA, 57 Jane St., at Hudson St. (627-8273)—Away from the weekenders and the tourist crowds, the far West Village feels like an actual neighborhood, and Mi Cocina, with its large, lace-curtained windows looking onto Hudson Street, fits like a hand inside a glove. The restaurant's L-shaped dining room is small and cozy; the walls are adorned with paintings and statuary (including a piece of a totem pole) and painted bright yellow with a brilliant purple trim, as if the decorator had returned, inspired, from Mardi Gras. On a crowded night, the diners' murmurings generate a low din that contributes to the easygoing conviviality. (Yes, the waiters dress in black, but they don't behave like aspiring models.)

Still—make no mistake—Mi Cocina is no burrito joint: the food is haute. The best dishes include *tlacoyo*, an appetizer consisting of a blue-corn tortilla topped with wild mushrooms and nopal cactus (which tastes like a sweeter, more buoyant version of a bell pepper); the incredibly rich *pechuga con rajas a la crema*, a grilled chicken breast served with strips of roasted poblano chilies, onions, and potatoes in a cream sauce; and *cazuela de calabacitas*, a hearty, healthy-tasting zucchini casserole made with onions, poblano chilies, and corn kernels that pop on your tongue like candy. Mexican hot chocolate (not on the menu, but almost always available), made with a hint of cinnamon and almond and served with whipped cream, is a dessert all by itself, while the light yet somehow cheesecake-creamy *flan de Almendra*, with its delicate caramel sauce, will redeem every bad flan-eating experience you've ever had. (Open daily for dinner and Sunday for brunch as well. Entrées $11-$17.)

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through June, the inimitable **BOBBY SHORT.** On Mondays, **WOODY ALLEN** plays with the **EDDY DAVIS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND.** . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** is in attendance.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—To hear **JOE WILLIAMS** (through May 25) in an intimate venue is to experience jazz transcendence: he can moan the blues like Big Joe Turner's half brother or inhabit a sophisticated ballad as if coached by Cole Porter himself. From May 27: Extrovert pianist **AHMAD JAMAL.** Mondays belong to national treasure **LES PAUL.**

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. Through May 24: The fact that the city is chock-full of young, eager-beaver pianists is no excuse for overlooking a mature veteran like **BILL MAYS.** Besides, he could teach the new generation a few lessons about constraint and taste. For this engagement, he's accompanied by bassist **JON BEAL.**

LENOX LOUNGE, 288 Lenox Ave., between 124th and 125th Sts. (427-0253)—Making up for lost time, this Harlem club brings first-rate jazz back north with a vengeance. The **CRAIG HANDY** quartet is in May 23-24. Handy is among the best of the new musicians loosening the stranglehold that Coltrane has had on tenor saxophonists these last four decades. He knows how to luxuriate in a note, turning whole phrases into mini rhapsodies—he takes his time and enhances ours.

MAXIM'S, 680 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (751-5111)—A mock-nineteenth-century bistro with stained glass, bevelled mirrors, and inlaid ceilings. Broadway singer **LILIANE MONTEVECCHI** is in starting May 27. Dining.

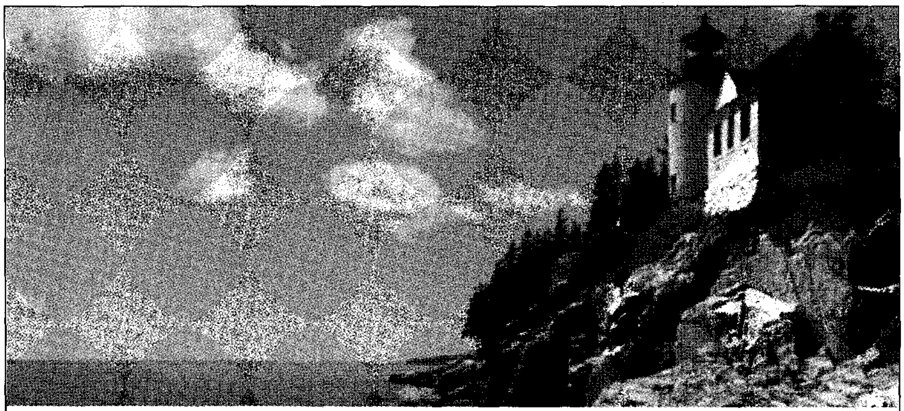
RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **ROSEMARY CLOONEY** is here through May 24, with a friend of hers, singer **DOLORES HOPE.** . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through May 25: As one of the "Two Franks" (along with Frank Wess) of the Count Basie band, saxophonist **FRANK FOSTER** established a reputation as a challenging improviser and a resourceful composer, which stood him in good stead when he came to lead the band in the nineties. A smaller unit will set off Foster's prodigious gifts as a soloist equally versed in the dialects of swing and modernism. From May 27: The **KENNY GARRETT** quartet. Dining.

TAVERN ON THE GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—This legendary tourist haven makes serious jazz fans welcome in the Chestnut Room, which resembles a hunting lodge and is every bit as over-the-top as the rest of the establishment. Singer **BONNIE STRICKMAN** is in May 21 and May 23-25.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks and feels like a classic jazz club: subterranean and thick with the spirits of past masters. Through May 25: **JIMMY HEATH AND THE HEATH BROTHERS.** Jazz has been blessed with two sets of three immensely talented brothers: the Joneses (Elvin, Thad, and Hank) and the Heaths. Jimmy, a saxophonist, flutist, composer, and arranger, is finally getting his due as one of the preëminent figures to emerge from the bop era; Percy is the renowned bassist for the Modern Jazz Quartet; and Albert (better known as Tootie) was long one of jazz drumming's best-kept secrets, until his recent initiation into the M.J.Q. alongside Percy. Blood ties obviously have something to do with the cohesion and grace that make the Heath Brothers—no matter how infrequently they reunite—one of the classic small groups. Starting May 27: The **LOU DONALDSON** quartet. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—Through May 24: Tapping into the wellspring of Tyner, Hancock, and Evans, pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** has fashioned her own engaging and personal sound. Everything she touches, from American songbook standards and Brazilian lilts to her own modernist pieces, rings with assuredness. Like an old married couple, Brackeen and her longtime colleague, the revered bassist **CECIL MC BEE,** seem to complete each other's musical sentences. From May 26: The **ROY MERIWETHER** trio. Dining.



You Don't Have To Go Far To Really Get Away.

Maine enjoys one of the greatest natural playgrounds in the world.

For a real change of pace this summer, come to Maine. Just hours from the big cities, but oh so far from ordinary! You'll find spectacular beauty from the mountains to the sea, and plenty of outdoor adventure in between. For your free getaway guide, complete with hundreds of events, activities, museums and places to stay and shop, write: Maine Tourism, 59 SHS, NY-47, Augusta, Maine 04333. Or call 1-800-782-6468.

Maine
The Way Life Should Be
http://www.visitmaine.com

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"The Gods of War: Sacred Imagery and the Decoration of Arms and Armor," a thought-provoking installation of sixty-five objects of warfare. . . . ¶ "The Glory of Byzantium" is the museum's most spectacular exhibition in years, a colossal exploration of the art, history, and thought of what is known as the Second Golden Age of Byzantium, an era of unsurpassed imperial opulence which lasted from the mid-ninth century to the thirteenth. Through July 6. . . . ¶ "The Print in the North: The Age of Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden." Through July 13. . . . ¶ "The Human Figure in Transition, 1900-45." Selections from the museum's collection of American sculpture. Through Sept. 28. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"More Than One: Twentieth Century Print Portfolios" assembles examples of serial presentations from Expressionism ("Hell," by Max Beckmann) to Conceptualism ("Demolished," by Rachel Whiteread). Through Sept. 2. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"A Century of Sculpture: The Nasher Collection" features work by Brancusi, Giacometti, Matisse, Smith, and other twentieth-century artists. Through June 1. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—"Rooms with a View: Environments for Video." While video is one of the most important art forms to have emerged since the sixties, sitting down to view it (or, just as often, standing up, feet swelling uncomfortably) is typically unpleasant. The environments here—by the Conceptualist veterans Dan Graham and Vito Acconci and such younger artists as Angela Bulloch and the team of Tobias Rehberger and Jorge Pardo—attempt to address this discomfort, although, as the Acconci room demonstrates, discomfort is often part of the point: in his installation, "Tele-Furni-System," the viewer's only support is user-unfriendly metal rods. The other environments are more comfort-oriented. Graham's mirrored-glass cubicles are probably the option best suited to actually sitting down for an extended viewing. Rehberger and Pardo have come up with a nutty exercise in "Jetsons" décor. The videos being screened are often great, from classics by Acconci and Richard Serra to more recent examples by Pipilotti Rist and Cheryl Donegan. Through June 15. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—Clearly, the curators of the 1997 Biennial exhibition, Lisa Phillips and Louise Neri, have determined not to make the same mistakes as their predecessors. In contradistinction to the haranguing 1993 show, with its noisy emphasis on identity politics, they have stressed a more poetic (or more palatable?) approach to social issues; the downside is that political engagement of any kind gets lost. This Biennial is, on the whole, hipper and smarter. What the show lacks—and no doubt lacks deliberately—is any sense of clearly articulated argument. Through June 1. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk," an exhibition about vanishing and extinct species. Through Sept. 1. . . . ¶ "Up in Central Park: Birds and Birders" provides a guide to the discipline, with displays devoted to seasonal birds, fulltime residents, and the selected habitats of both in the adjacent park. Through Aug. 14. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"From Pockets to Pouches: Three Centuries of Handbags." More than forty pieces from the museum's collection demonstrate the evolution of the purse, from Colonial-era gaming bags to the elaborately beaded inventions of Judith Leiber. Through June 22. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5, and Saturday evenings until 9.)

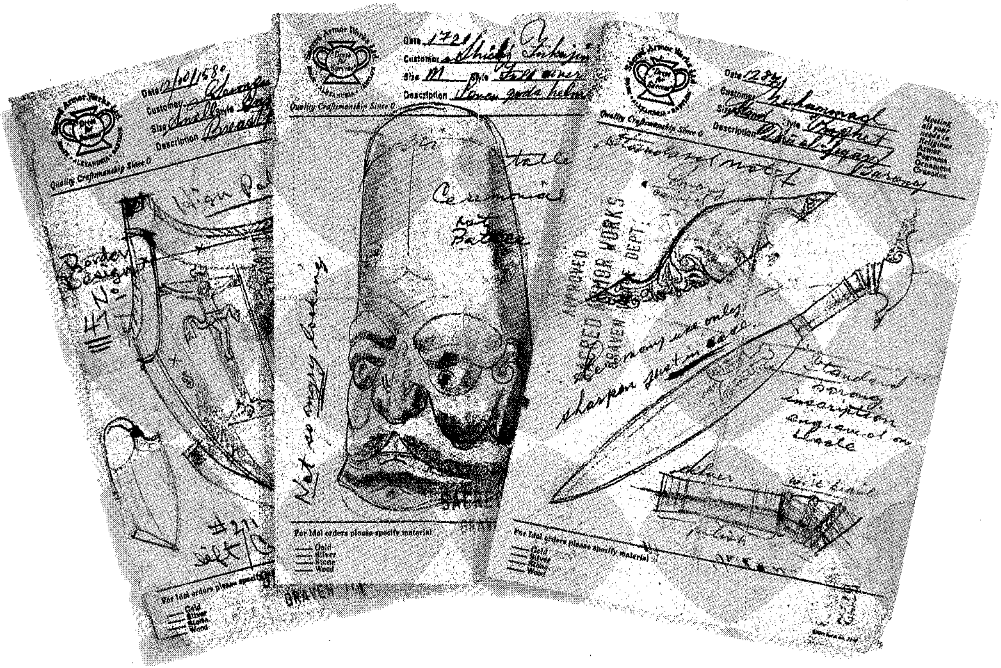
Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155)—"Enlightenment Embodied: The Art of the Japanese Buddhist Sculptor." Thirty-two exhibits, most devoted to the various manifestations of the Buddha, from serene to ferocious, including twenty-three designated Important Cultural Properties by the Japanese government and one—a seventh-century bronze relief depicting a scene from the Lotus Sutra—that is an official National Treasure. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—Chantal Akerman's most recent project, "D'Est" ("From the East"), continues in the inspired vein of her best art films. Here she presents footage documenting scenes of everyday life in the former Eastern bloc. Akerman favors long, mesmerizing shots; she dwells on the faces of her anonymous subjects with extraordinary attention, and the images seem radiant with empathy. In the wintry, ramshackle world she shows us, everything looks like an unbelievable hassle—boring, exhausting, and yet somehow shot through with poetry. Through May 27. . . . ¶ "Points of Entry," three photography exhibitions ("A Nation of Strangers," "Reframing America," and "Tracing Cultures") exploring immigration. Through Aug. 17. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (831-7272)—"Realigning Vision: Alternative Currents in South American Drawing" presents examples from forty-six artists from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Uruguay, and Peru. Through Sept. 7. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St. (977-7170)—"A Passion for the Past: The Collection of Bertram K. and Nina Fletcher Little" offers eighteenth- and nineteenth-century portraits, landscapes, and everyday objects (hooked rugs, decoys, blanket chests, case clocks) from rural New England. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"Visionary Daughters of Albion: A Bicentenary Celebration of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley" revisits the papers, publications, and personal effects of the mother and daughter, authors of "The Vindication of the Rights of Woman" and "Frankenstein," respectively. The pair witnessed—or caused—a startling amount of public and private turbulence: the show includes the suicide note of Percy Shelley's first wife, Harriet Westbrook, who wished her husband the happiness of which she felt deprived. It also makes some surprising but logical connections, linking, for instance, the Reign of Terror and Lord Byron's promiscuity. Salomon Room; through Sept. 13. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)



"The Gods of War," at the Metropolitan Museum.

JACK MOLLOY

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, uptown and downtown galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; Chelsea galleries are generally closed Tuesdays and open Sundays.)

Richard Artschwager—A suite of impeccably tasteful paintings, in textured acrylic, of potatoes, with most of the Celotex canvases set inside the artist's signature plywood boxes. Through June 28. (Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 752-2929.)

Jac Leirner—Business cards, hung from the ceiling and mounted in strips along the wall, by a noted Brazilian Conceptualist. She creates some faintly interesting visual effects and makes some mildly witty points, but it's hard to avoid the impression that these works are primarily intended for the dealers and curators whose cards constitute the artist's raw material. Through May 31. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. 315-0470.)

George Segal—A new batch of plaster-cast sculptures and a series of charcoal-and-pastel portraits, by the sculptor who created the figures for the newly opened Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, in Washington, D.C. The familiar groups of white plaster figures (bus passengers, friends picnicking) are here accompanied by some stark sculptures in black and red; in Segal's austere, antiseptic world, a single drop of red paint splashed from a portrait bust onto the flat black door behind it resonates with alarming urgency. The drawings are even more impres-

Advertisement

BORN TO ZIG.

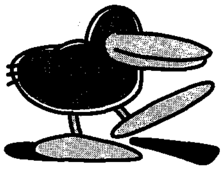
(CONFESSIONS OF A CATERA OWNER.)

By the time he was 25 years old, my father had spent more time behind the controls of a B-17 than driving a car. Since 1945, however, the gap has grown considerably the other way. The turning point was probably the two days it took him and my mother to navigate to, around and through Terre Haute in a '49 Kaiser after a heavy snowstorm. It was their honeymoon.

His whole working life involved cars, although he had nothing to do with the automobile industry. He was a salesman, mostly; continually patrolling territories of a scope that would have intimidated Lewis & Clark. Judging by the wide variety of expensive toys that surrounded me in my childhood, followed by a free five-year college education, I would say my father was pretty good at what he did.

Before cell phones and e-mail and v-mail and fax machines, the one machine that mattered most to a salesman was a car. My father owned a lot of cars, each one progressively larger.

I learned to drive in one of his more immense land monsters. I know from personal experience that it could not zig. (It could, at times, however, be coaxed into doing some very un-luxury-car things, always with me behind the wheel and my father nowhere to be seen.)



Of course, this was at a time when one couldn't say "luxury" and "fun" in the same sentence, unless one could read 223 pages of Webster's Dictionary without pausing for breath.

Now there's Catera.

Catera scrambles your preconceptions and turns out to be a whole new omelet. Instead of pinching an idea or two from a performance car and putting it into a luxury car, Catera brings innovative thinking direct from the auto racing circuit, a rich and often under-utilized source of zig. Like sodium-filled exhaust valves. (It means more engine power; the whys and wherefores belong in a tech manual.)

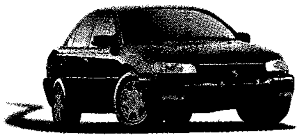
Catera gives you full-range traction control, which means you can have Terre Haute or anywhere else quickly in your rearview mirror, even in a snowstorm.

Catera even comes with its own college. Not for you, for Catera salespeople. They learn the body, soul and vision of Catera. So you get a completely new kind of buying experience. My father would approve.

Am I my father's child? Surely. I've spoken in his voice too many times for there not to be a genetic connection. But there are some differences. My eclectic disposition looks for that that says luxury and fun, together. I need a car to do some un-luxury-car things as part of its nature, without coaxing or coercion. I need my zigs.

CATERA™

THE CADDY THAT ZIGS.™



STARTING AT $29,995

MSRP EXCLUDING DESTINATION CHARGE. Tax, license and optional equipment extra. For the authorized Catera dealer nearest you, call 1-800-333-4CAD or visit us at www.catera.com.

CADILLAC®

© 1996 GM Corp. All rights reserved.

Always wear safety belts, even with air bags.

sive: a meticulously observed portrait of the French critic Pierre Restany sets the subject's leonine head, glowing with Caravaggesque intensity, against a deep, soft gloom. Through June 6. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. 586-0110.)

Wayne Thiebaud—Paintings and drawings from the emperor of ice cream. The selection includes examples from his pastry and pie paintings, his vertiginous streetscapes, and a new series of delicious flatland vistas in his signature high-cholesterol palette. Through June 27. (Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 988-6870.)

"CityScapes"—An exhibit of urban images in which some impressive work turns up: Red Grooms's funky sculptural fantasia of a traffic jam of limousines in front of the Plaza Hotel, constructed so that the head of a hackney cab's horse seems to loom hugely over the viewer's shoulder; a cool, futuristic city in aluminum-and-zinc modules laid out on the floor, by Miguel Navarro; a wonderful oil painting of a London street, by Frank Auerbach, gracefully combining precise observation (a fire escape) and extravagant gesture (the traffic); and three flawless pencil drawings of the fairy spires of 57th Street, by Avigdor Arikha. Through June 7. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900. Open Mondays.)

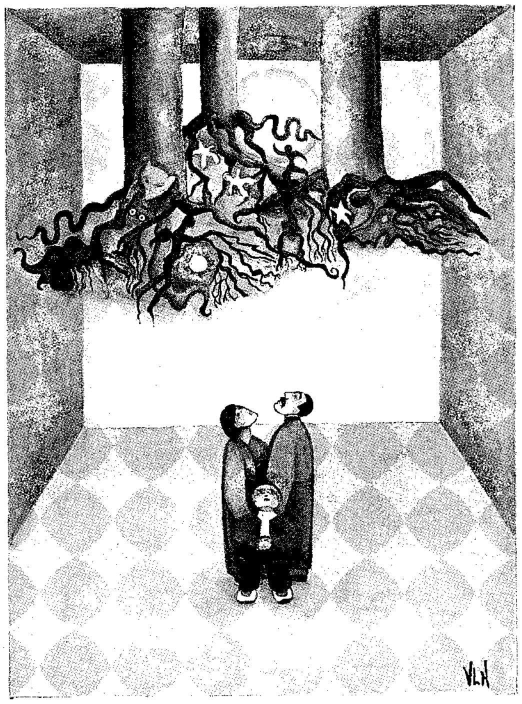
Short List—**CHUCK AGRO**, McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. 956-3366. Through June 11. . . . **HUGO BASTIDAS**, Haime, 41 E. 57th St. 888-3550. Open Mondays; through June 13. . . . **OSCAR BLUEMENER**, Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. 752-5135. Through June 6. . . . **SAINT CLAIR CEMIN**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through June 21. . . . **FRANCESCO CLEMENTE**, Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313. Through June 14. . . . **HARVEY DINNERSTEIN**, Wunderlich, 50 W. 57th St. 974-8444. Through May 30. . . . **RICHARD ESTES**, Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900. Open Mondays; through June 7. . . . **NANCY FRIED**, DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through June 6. . . . **ALFRED JENSEN** and **TONY SMITH**, Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292. Both shows through June 20. . . . **GWEN JOHN**, Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. 752-7764. Through June 13. . . . **IDA KOHLMEYER**, Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. 397-0766. Through June 14. . . . **HENRI MATISSE**, Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810. Through June 20. . . . **ODD NERDRUM**, Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 355-4545. Through June 27. . . . **ARIC OBROSEY**, Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767. Through June 28. . . . **PETER POSKAS**, Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122. Through May 30. . . . **JOHN SLOAN**, Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 307-5730. Through June 6. . . . **JOAQUÍN TORRES-GARCÍA**, Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. 755-7288. Through July 18.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Tony Feher—Modest sculptures utilizing mundane, typically disposable objects: Styrofoam packing materials, plastic and glass bottles, marbles, bottle tops, tin cans, and, in one case, plastic flowers planted in a block of concrete. Feher trades in the casual poetry of everyday life—rubbish and domesticity are close thematic companions. At the same time, he has organized these humble materials very carefully to exploit their formal resonances: garbage may be the material, but beauty remains the impetus. Through June 21. (D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460.)

Maureen Gallace—Small paintings of country roads and houses in landscape settings. Initially, their conventional subject matter is utterly soothing; only after a moment's reflection do you come to dwell on the spatial incongruities, or on the fact that none of the buildings are equipped with doors or windows. The images have an abstract quality, and they transmit a frisson of existential unease. Through June 14. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121.)

Gary Hume—Enamel paintings that alternately evoke the swinging London of the sixties and American Pop of the same period, rendered with a cool *fin de millénaire* sensibility. They are really more a glossy glorification of the painted surface than an exercise in figuration. "Angel" could be a late Warhol portrait reimagined in subtle, high-art colors; in "Cerith," another portrait (this one on aluminum), Twiggy eyes are the only inflection on the face's shiny contour, which is crowned with a glorious patch of cerulean. Through June 27. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200.)



An installation by Nedko Solakov, at Deitch Projects.

VIRGINIA HATLEY

James Hyde—Hot, vivid variations on Abstract Expressionism, in materials ranging from axle grease to chocolate to (of all things) paint. "Fix," a massive (ten by fifteen foot) wall piece in vinyl and bright tape, vibrates with electric plasticity. A series of axle-grease smears in glass boxes, "Grip," "Grind," and "Graft," are sweetly mysterious gestures from a ghostly parallel universe. In "Sweep," blobby, Hofmannesque rectangles in pale, tasteful hues have been slapped onto a pink carpet laid out like a corpse on a steel slab. Through May 24. (Baldacci, 521 W. 21st St. 463-0919.)

Kate Javens—Spare, elegant oils of birds, fishes, and hands. Although they verge on the precious, they possess a certain folksy gravitas. The artist's attempt to link her work to American social history is self-conscious and almost clumsy (the crow seems to be an evocation of an early labor reformer's free spirit), but she has nonetheless found something firm and gritty to anchor her work to. Through May 25. (Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767.)

Marilyn Minter—Small, shiny paintings by an artist whose previous work has included floridly voluptuous images drawn from pornography. In these new enamel-on-metal works, she is (like a number of contemporary artists) fascinated by makeup and plastic surgery: she dwells on closeups of mascara-thick eyelashes, scary long nails, grotesquely luscious lips. Through June 14. (XL, 504 W. 22nd St. 462-4111.)

Kellie O'Bosky—Over the past eighteen months, the artist has painted fifty-eight self-portraits, all based on photo-booth pictures and all entitled "Me." In certain cases, she places her face among images of women taken from various magazines; she and her cohorts all look unnervingly aggressive. O'Bosky enjoys dribbles and spatters, using the details of makeup, clothing, and hair styles as occasions for indulging in wet-'n'-wild painterly technique. In fact, the "Me" series suggests a hybrid of de Kooning's "Woman" paintings and Revlon advertising. Through May 31. (Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555.)

Tony Smith (1912-80)—Two sculptures and related works on paper. The showpiece here is "Moondog" (1964), a tower of octahedral columns rising some seventeen feet—one of the most impressive works of sculpture exhibited in New York recently. The show also includes the more modestly scaled but still remarkable "Smog" (1970), a colony of interlocking tetrahedrons. Through June 7. (Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Open Tuesdays, closed Sundays.)

Short List—**SHONAGH ADELMAN**, Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. 627-3930. Through May 31. . . . **ANDREW EHRENWORTH**, Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Through June 15. . . . **CATHERINE HOWE**, Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. 741-3318. Through June 15. . . . **JIM SHAW** and **GARY SIMMONS**, Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100. Both shows through June 7. . . . **MEG WEBSTER**, Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through June 21.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Sean Landers—Paragon of the "loser" trend in contemporary art, Landers is best known for lengthy, hilarious text paintings and excruciatingly self-revelatory videos. Now, perhaps weary of self-exposure, he has turned to more conventional paintings, which nevertheless stay close to the narcissistic woundedness of his previous work. They are large and cartoonish, and their subject matter is pure Landers: a picnic scene featuring a leering robot and a strangely buxom rabbit, a group of aliens lost at sea. Through May 31. (Rosen, 130 Prince St. 941-0203.)

Joan Mitchell (1926-92)—Late, luminous paintings from the seventies, some of them never before exhibited in New York. Through May 24. (Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012.)

Elizabeth Murray—Recent paintings by an artist known for her clever hybridization of abstract and representational forms. While the relief surfaces of her shaped canvases seem to have become shallower, the formal vigor that animates their incongruous elements remains vivid. Looking over these paintings, you can't help remarking the breadth of her influence on younger artists mining the tradition of biomorphic abstraction. Through June 20. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. 431-9224.)

Nedko Solakov—"Somewhere (Under the Tree)," an installation by the Bulgarian artist, who has suspended the gnarly roots of several large trees from the gallery ceiling and snuggled a community of plastic people into their tangles. Through June 7. (Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300.)

"Celluloid Cave"—Films by such artists as Dara Friedman, Martin Kersels, and Marijke van Warmerdam. Through June 7. (Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway. 966-9520.)

"Eight Paintings"—By Celmins, Guston, Johns, Morandi, Pollock, Stout, Taaffe, and Winters. Through June 7. (Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. 219-9600.)

"Rajasthani Miniatures"—Watercolors from the fifteenth century through the nineteenth, depicting idealized scenes from the lives of the princely castes of northwestern India. Through June 7. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**MARK DI SUVERO**, Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. 228-2828. Through June 14. . . . **SUZANNE ETKIN**, Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777. Through May 31. . . . **GILBERT AND GEORGE**, Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St., 965-0753; and Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway, 966-6160. Both shows through June 28. . . . **DONALD JUDD**, Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. 925-4338. Through May 31. . . . **KATHARINE KUHARIC**, P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway. 941-8642. Through May 24. . . . **FERNANDO LEAL AUDIRAC**, M-13, at 72 Greene St. 925-3007. Through May 31. . . . **ROBIN LOWE**, Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. 925-8035. Through May 31. . . . **ELLIOTT PUCKETTE**, Kasmin, 74 Grand St. 219-3219. Through June 14. . . . **HUNTER REYNOLDS**, Boesky & Callery, 51 Greene

St. 941-9888. Through May 31. . . . **ALEXIS ROCKMAN,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. 966-4480. Through June 28. . . . **EDWIN SCHLOSSBERG,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232. Through May 31. . . . **TON SIME,** Bibro, 584 Broadway. 941-1734. Through June 21. . . . **MIMI SMITH,** Kustera, 41 Wooster St. 965-1527. Through May 24. . . . **MARK TANSEY,** Marcus, 578 Broadway. 226-3200. Through May 31.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Sotheby's—May 21: The concluding auction from the estate of Pamela Harriman. . . . ¶ May 22: Sales of Old Master paintings and of French furniture. . . . ¶ May 23: Nineteenth-century paintings. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Christie's—May 21: Sales of French furniture and of decorative arts from the gallery of the Parisian dealer Yves Mikaeloff. . . . ¶ May 22: Ninteenth-century paintings. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.)

Swann—An auction of prints, drawings, and watercolors. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. May 22.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Helen Levitt / Édouard Baldus (1813-89)—Forty vintage New York prints from 1936 to 1945. (See also I.C.P. Midtown.) Through June 27. / Twenty architectural photographs of Paris, by one of the early masters. Through May 31. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220.)

"Coming of Age"—A benefit show of photographs by artists who have published in the journal *Blind Spot*, including William Eggleston, David LaChapelle, Lois Conner, Nobuyoshi Araki, Dorte Eissfeldt, and Mitch Epstein. Through May 29. (White Columns, 154 Christopher St. 924-4212. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

"Glorious Gardens"—Inflorescent imagery from throughout the present century, by such artists as Atget, Sudek, Blossfeldt, Porter, and Meyerowitz. Through June 28. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777)—"Art & Science: Investigating Matter," a series of laboratory photographs by Catherine Wagner. Through June 15. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (860-1777)—"Helen Levitt: Crosstown," a retrospective of the premier New York street photographer's career. . . . ¶ "Fast Forward: Growing Up in the Shadow of Hollywood," Lauren Greenfield's recent series on Los Angeles youth. (A complementary show of prints from this series is at Saul, 560 Broadway, 431-0747, through June 28.) Both shows through Sept. 7. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**MARIO ALGAZE,** Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059. Through July 5. . . . **ROBERT BLACKMON,** Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Through June 28. . . . **MARILYN BRIDGES,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through July 31. . . . **NANCY BUIRSKI,** Schickler, 52 E. 76th St. 737-6647. Open Mondays; through May 24. . . . **RENA BASS FORMAN,** Winston Wächter, 111 E. 65th St. 327-2526. Through May 24. . . . **CHRISTOPHER GIGLIO,** Danziger, 130 Prince St. 226-0056. Through May 30. . . . **LYLE ASHTON HARRIS,** Erben, 476 Broome St. 966-5283. Through June 21. . . . **DAVE HEATH,** Lowinsky, 578 Broadway. 226-5440. Through June 28. . . . **GUSTAV KLUTSIS,** Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. 794-4444. Through June 28. . . . **JOHN PFAHL,** Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through June 30. . . . **JOSÉ PICAYO,** Rice, 325 W. 11th St. 366-6660. Open Thursdays through Saturdays, 1 to 7, Sundays, 1 to 6; through June 29. . . . **CLIFFORD ROSS,** Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. 628-5300. Through June 14. . . . **FRANK STEWART,** Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; through June 14. . . . **PIERRE VERGER,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through June 28. . . . **JOEL-PETER WITKIN,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Through June 21.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Jewish Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

Amato Opera Company—Presenting "The Merry Widow," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. May 24 at 7:30 and May 25 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducting. May 22 and May 24 at 8 and May 23 at 2: Soprano Jane Eaglen is featured in Wagner's Prelude and "Liebestod" from "Tristan und Isolde," in a concert that also includes Bruckner's Symphony No. 3. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030.) . . . ¶ May 26 at 8: A free Memorial Day performance of the same program, this time with Jeannine Altmeyer as soloist. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. No tickets necessary.)

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra—The conductorless ensemble performs the Third Suite of Respighi's "Ancient Airs and Dances" and Bartók's "Rumanian Folk Dances"; Richard Goode is the soloist in Mozart's Piano Concertos in E-Flat Major (K. 449) and G Major (K. 453). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. May 21 at 8.)

Voices of Ascension Chorus—Dennis Keene directs music from the English Renaissance, by Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons, and others. (Ascension Church, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. May 21 at 8.)

Russian Chamber Chorus of New York—Performing works by Rachmaninoff, Taneyev, Ippolitov-Ivanov, and others, with Nikolai Kachanov directing. (Church of the Good Shepherd, 240 E. 31st St. May 21 at 8. For information about tickets, call 928-1402.)

New Amsterdam Singers—Clara Longstreth leads Daniel Pinkham's Wedding Cantata, Brahms's "Liebeslieder" Waltzes, madrigals by Monteverdi, and several pieces by William Hawley. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. May 21 at 8. For information about tickets, call 568-5948.)

Amor Artis Chorus and Orchestra—Johannes Somary directs Bach's B-Minor Mass. (St. Jean Baptiste Church, Lexington Ave. at 76th St. May 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-4513.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Hugh Wolff conducts Strauss's "Don Juan," Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Gustavo Romero), and Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra. (Alice Tully Hall. May 22 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

New York Chamber Ensemble—The large ensemble offers a program that scores high on the curiosity index: Florent Schmitt's "Soirées," Hindemith's "Hérodiade" (which the composer described as an "orchestral recitation after a poem by Mallarmé," though it was unveiled in 1944 as a ballet, by Martha Graham), and Wolf-Ferrari's Chamber Symphony, as well as the première of John Lindberg's "Groundings," a jazz-inflected chamber concerto that here spotlights the String Trio of New York. Stephen Rogers Radcliffe conducts. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. May 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 870-2439.)

Sylvan Winds—The group offers a program of Czech music for wind ensemble: the Parthia in F Major by František Kramář (better known by the German version of his name, Franz Krommer), Janáček's "Mládí," Rudolf Nováček's Sinfonietta, and Dvořák's D-Minor Serenade. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. May 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 222-3569.)

New York Treble Singers—The women's choir offers music by Louise Talma, Annea Lockwood, Carrie Jacobs Bond, Alice Parker, and others. Virginia Davidson directs. (Chapel of

COOPERSTOWN

NEW YORK

The Perfect Getaway!

Take a memorable journey back in time at The Farmers' Museum, where you can see rare farm animals and enjoy demonstrations of traditional crafts and historic music.

COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK

Where all the fun and beauty of America are captured in one perfect village

Call Toll-Free 1-888-875-2969 x130 for information on the perfect getaway

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, 7 W. 55th St. May 23 at 7:30. Tickets at the door.)

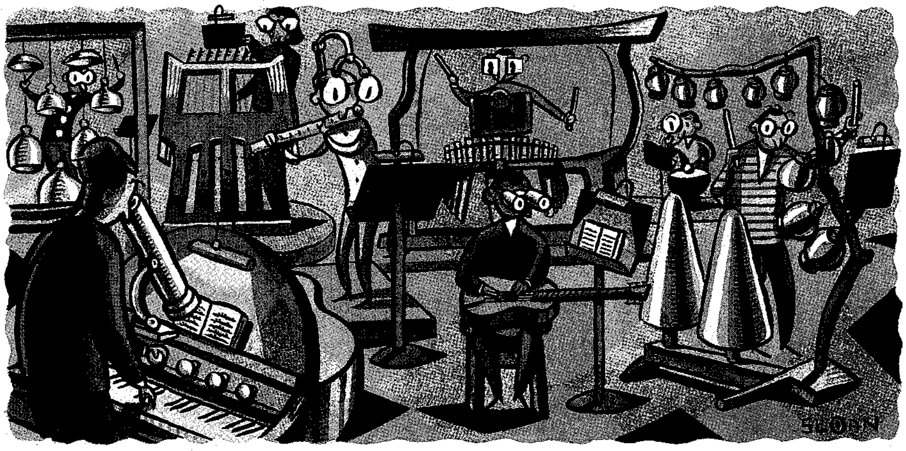
City Island Baroque Ensemble—Nurit Pacht is featured in Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4 and Sarasate's Introduction and Tarantella. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. May 25 at noon.)

Bronx Arts Ensemble Orchestra—Performing Handel's "Water Music," featuring oboist Marsha Heller, with Kenneth Cooper leading from the harpsichord. (Woodlawn Cemetery, Jerome and Bainbridge Aves., the Bronx. May 25 at 2. No tickets necessary. For further information, call 718-601-7399.)

RECITALS

Musicians Accord and the Colorado String Quartet—The two ensembles team up for a program that comprises Ginastera's String Quartet No. 3 (with soprano Christine Schadeberg), Sheila Silver's "G Whiz" for two violins and marimba, and Shostakovich's Piano Quintet. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 21 at 8.)

Remembering Jacob Druckman—The Juilliard School memorializes the late composer, who taught on the school's faculty from 1956 to 1972, with a concert of his solo and chamber works, including his String Quartet No. 3, "Other Voices," and "Come Round." (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. May 21 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)



The American Festival of Microtonal Music concludes this week.

MICHAEL SLOAN

American Festival of Microtonal Music—The conclusion of this year's celebration of music built on minute intervals and nontraditional scales. May 21 at 8: Although most listeners are likely to assume that microtonal music is a contemporary phenomenon, creative divisions of the octave have occupied musicians and music theorists since antiquity. This concert by the American Festival of Microtonal Music Ensemble presents works from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—by John Dowland, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Andrea Gabrieli—employing tunings that diverge noticeably from the equal temperament in widespread use today. Twentieth-century pieces by Harry Partch, Julián Carrillo, Andrew Culver, and Johnny Reinhard (the festival's director) round out the program. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University; enter at Broadway and 116th St.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 8: In the première of Johnny Reinhard's cello concerto "Odysseus," sixty musicians will be positioned around St. Paul's Chapel to suggest the islands that Homer's hero visited on his peregrinations; David Eggar serves as soloist. Also on the program are Sofia Gubaidulina's Duo-Sonata for Bassoons, Terry Riley's minimalist classic "In C" (played here in just intonation, in a version for plucked instruments), Xenakis's "Enbellie," and Luc Marcel's "Beach Glass." (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University.) . . . ¶ May 23 at 8: Percy Grainger's "Free Music" for four theremins, Ivan Vishnegradsky's "Chant Nocturne" (performed by violinist Tom Chiu and duo-pianists Joshua Pierce and Dorothy Jonas), and works by Ornette Coleman, Jon Catler, Mayumi Reinhard, Mordecai Sandberg, Kyle Gann, and Pascale Criton. (New York University Theatre, 35 W. 4th St. For information about tickets for all festival events, call 517-3550.)

Speculum Musicae—The contemporary-music ensemble hosts a benefit evening of conversation with Andrew Porter, *The New Yorker's* music critic from 1972 to 1992, with performances of seminal pieces by Carter, Babbitt, and Davidovsky interspersed. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. May 22 at 6. For information about tickets, call 865-9028.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—The instrumentalists, with tenor John Elwes, offer an all-Handel program comprising excerpts from several of the composer's Biblical oratorios, as well as his G-Minor Oboe Concerto. (Temple Emanu-El, Fifth Ave. at 65th St. May 22 at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)

Bargemusic—Violinist Ida Levin and pianist Edward Auer perform Brahms's Scherzo from the "F-A-E Sonata" (a work communally composed by Brahms, Schumann, and Albert Dietrich); cellist Ronald Thomas and Mr. Auer offer Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata; and all three join for Brahms's B-Major Piano Trio. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. May 22 at 7:30 and May 25 at 4.)

Eleonor Bindman—The pianist performs Bach's "Italian" Concerto and Brahms's Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. May 25 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

Nurit Pacht and Ilan Rechtman—The violinist and the pianist offer Beethoven's Sonata No. 10 and Sarasate's Introduction and Tarantella. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. May 26 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Prism Saxophone Quartet—Offering music by John Cage, Jennifer Higdon, and Ryo Noda, as well as by two of the ensemble's members, Matthew Levy and Tim Ries. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. May 27 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

Ekko!—A modern-music ensemble, performing music by Takemitsu, Xenakis, Reich, and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 27 at 8.)

ALSO OF INTEREST

New York Youth Symphony Chamber Ensemble. (Park Avenue Terrace, St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. May 22 at 5:30. No tickets necessary.) . . . **Interschool Orchestras of New York.** (New York University Theatre, 35 W. 4th St. May 22 at 7. Admission by contribution. . . . ¶ New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park. May 25 at 3. No tickets required beyond garden admission.) . . . **William Paul Delp:** Solos and small-scale chamber works by this composer, performed by clarinettist Jean Kopperud, cellist Adam Grabois, and others. (500-504 E. 63rd St., thirty-eighth floor. May 24 at 7. For information about tickets, call 662-6342.) . . . **New England Symphonic Ensemble:** John Rutter conducts two different programs, with massed student, church, and community choruses. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 24 and May 26 at 8.) . . . **Brooklyn Philharmonic:** Sherrill Milnes, the baritone, polishes his conducting chops to lead a chorus of high-school and community singers in Mendelssohn's "Elijah," with baritone Mark Delavan in the title role. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 25 at 8.) . . . **"This World":** A meditative, environmental, electro-acoustic musical event. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. May 27 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Good for What Ails You—This season, the Big Apple Circus has whipped up something resembling a nineteenth-century travelling medicine show. Within its single ring are Russian magicians who change clothes before the audience's eyes without undressing, stallions that race through latticework trellises, Parisian acrobats, and other emblems of the trade. (Cunningham Park, Francis Lewis Boulevard and Union Turnpike, Fresh Meadows, Queens. 212-307-4100. May 20-23 at 11 A.M. and 6:30, and May 24-25 at 12:30 and 4:30.)

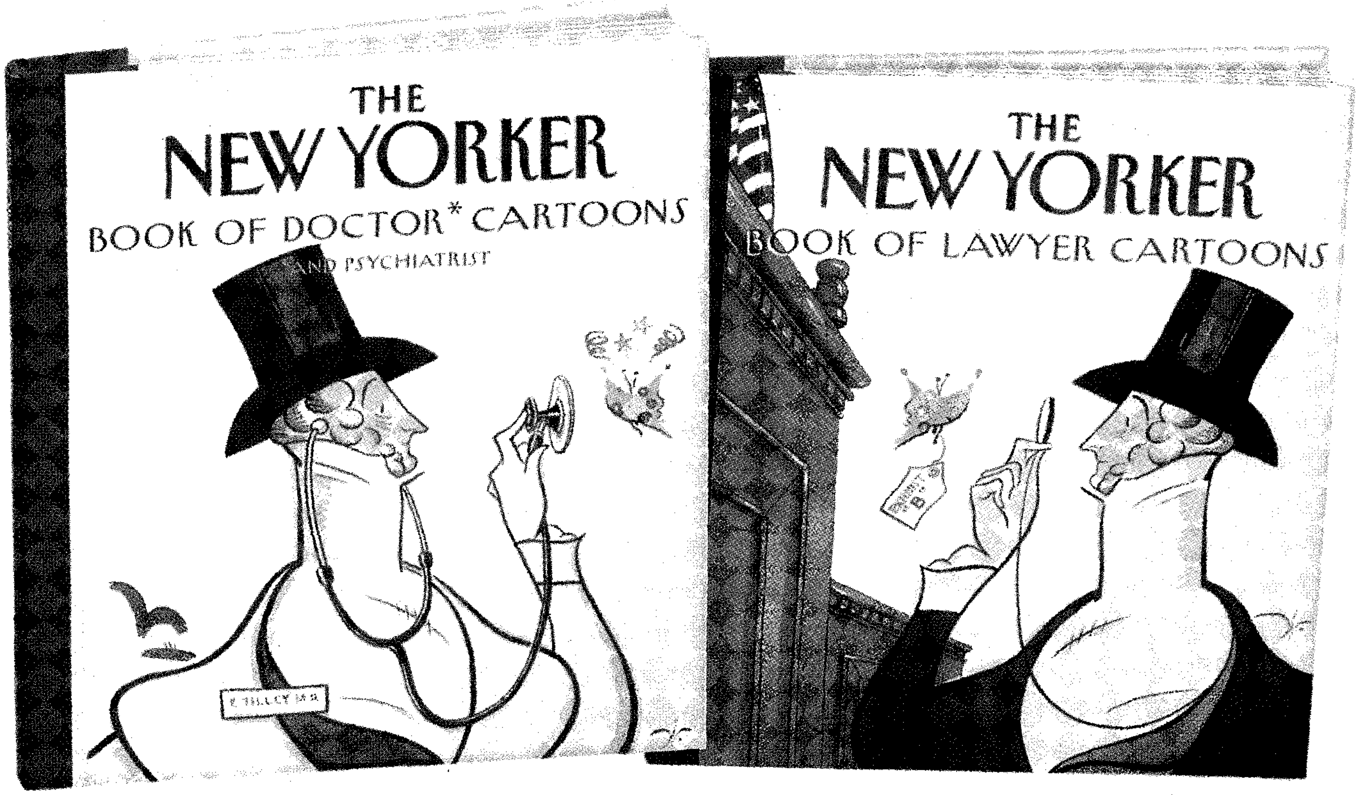
All Decked Out—While some twenty-five hundred unfettered sailors roam the streets of Manhattan during this year's Fleet Week, the dozen or so frigates, destroyers, and so forth that they sailed in on, from the United States and Great Britain, will be open for free public tours May 22-27, from 1 to 4. For information, call 245-2533.

Tap Happy—May 25th, in addition to being the birthday of the late Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, is also, by act of Congress, National Tap Dance Day. Savion Glover and other members of the cast of "Bring In da Noise, Bring In da Funk," as well as Buster Brown, Jimmy Slyde, and other dancers, celebrate the day with a performance at 7:30 at Town Hall. (123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

Readings—May 21 at 8: Colm Tóibín presents passages from his novel "The Story of the Night." (Rocky Sullivan's, 129 Lexington Ave., near 29th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 7: Dramatist Wallace Shawn reads from his most recent play (and film), "The Designated Mourner." (Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 7:30: *Daily News* editor Pete Hamill tears through his latest novel, "Snow in August." (Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 7:30 and 10:30: Jim Carroll, Maggie Estep, and Hubert Selby, Jr., take turns at the microphone. (Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. 228-6300.) . . . ¶ May 23 at 10:30: A reading by the poets known as the Unbearables (including Jill Rapaport, Carl Watson, and Sparrow), who will excoriate self-help books. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door.)

Talks—May 21 at 7:30: Deborah Solomon, author of "Utopia Parkway: The Life and Work of Joseph Cornell," shows slides of Cornell's masterpieces and discusses his life. (Barnes & Noble, Sixth Ave. at 21st St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 6: Elizabeth Ferrer, curator of the Americas Society's exhibit on María Izquierdo, considers the life and work of the painter, who earlier this century was one of Mexico's best-known artists. (Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950, ext. 357.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 6:30: *Vogue* magazine food critic Jeffrey Steingarten moderates a discussion with *Wall Street Journal* Leisure & Arts page editor Raymond Sokolov, Indian-cooking authority Madhur Jaffrey, Lespinasse executive chef Gray Kunz, and others on the influence of Asian food on American cuisine. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742.) . . . ¶ May 23 at 6:30: Keith Gilyard, director of Syracuse University's writing program, expounds on Ebonics and the media. (Brecht Forum, 122 W. 27th St. 242-4201.)

Walk—May 26 at 1: A Memorial Day Big Onion Walking Tour of lower-Manhattan battle sites. For more information, call 439-1090.



There's something funny about DOCTORS and LAWYERS!

WHAT'S FUNNY about doctors is **THE NEW YORKER BOOK OF DOCTOR CARTOONS.** In 85 uproarious cartoons, here are analysts analyzing, doctors prescribing, operating, referring ("I'd like you to see a botanist. You exhibit many of the symptoms of Dutch elm disease"); doctors being sensitive ("The doctor will see you now, Mrs. Perkins. Please try not to upset him."); doctors being confrontational ("The doctor's lawyer will see you now."). From internists to acupuncturists, here are doctors of every stripe deftly dissected by great *New Yorker* cartoonists from James Thurber and Peter Arno, to Shanahan and Chast.

AND WHAT'S FUNNY about lawyers is **THE NEW YORKER BOOK OF LAWYER CARTOONS.** Here, in 85 hilarious cartoons, are lawyers in the courtroom, in their offices, ambulance chasing, winning — but mostly losing — cases ("I've just about resigned myself to your getting twenty years."); lawyers specializing, suing negligent children, negotiating a "pre-victual agreement" before ordering a Chinese lunch. Lawyers observed, teased, and immortalized by some of our most brilliant cartoonists, from Charles Addams and George Price and William Steig to William Hamilton, Lee Lorenz, Michael Maslin, Jack Ziegler and Charles Barsotti.

At all bookstores • Publishing by Knopf

And don't forget

THE NEW YORKER BOOK OF CAT CARTOONS

The kitten-size NEW YORKER BOOK OF CAT CARTOONS

THE NEW YORKER BOOK OF DOG CARTOONS

At the crossroads
of fine dining,
art and fashion.

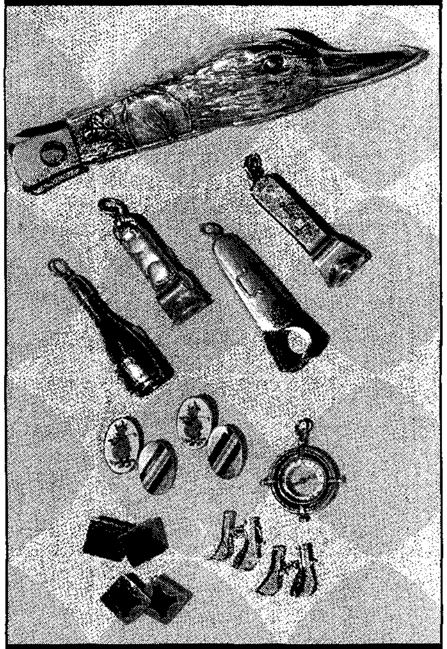
Located on Manhattan's elegant Upper East Side, the Surrey Hotel stands in the cultural center of New York. With its spacious, discreetly priced suites, fitness center and attentive service, the Surrey offers sophisticated travelers value for both short- and long-term stays. The Surrey is also home to the famed restaurant Daniel.

For rates or a brochure, please call Luz Rodriguez at 1-800-9 SURREY.

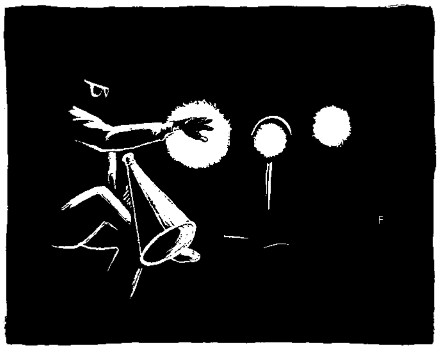
SURREY HOTEL
A MANHATTAN EAST SUITE HOTEL
Get the better of New York.℠

20 East 76th Street • New York, NY 10021
Fax: (212) 628-1549

Nineteenth Century
Decorative Arts and Jewelry



JAMES II
GALLERIES, LTD.
Established 1966
11 EAST 57th STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022
TELEPHONE (212) 355-7040 FAX (212) 593-0341



THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

ADDICTED TO LOVE—A romantic comedy about two spurned lovers (Meg Ryan and Matthew Broderick) who team up to win back—or revenge themselves on—the man and the woman (Tcheky Karyo and Kelly Preston) who rejected them. Directed by Griffin Dunne, from Robert Gordon's screenplay. Opening May 23. (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

BRASSED OFF—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening May 23. (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Square, and New York Twin.)

THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK—Two groups invade an island of contemporary dinosaurs, one (led by Jeff Goldblum) hoping to study them, the other (led by Arliss Howard and Pete Postlethwaite) out to exploit them, in an adventure directed by Steven Spielberg. Screenplay by David Koepp, based on Michael Crichton's novel. Opening May 23. (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Olympia, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, and Ziegfeld.)

PONETTE—Writer-director Jacques Doillon's story of a four-year-old (Victoire Thivisol) who must come to terms with the sudden death of her mother. In French. Opening May 23. (Angelika Film Center and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 26.)

AUSTIN POWERS: INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY—Mike Myers looks groovy in crushed-velvet suits in this parody of James Bond films and the swinging London of the sixties. The jokes are hit and miss, but Myers, who plays dual roles (he's the super-sleuth photographer of the title, who's awakened from a cryogenic sleep he entered in 1967, and he's also Dr. Evil) and has upped the ante by writing his own script, delivers every line with a gentle, toothy, hilarious abandon. The film runs long—there's not nearly as much happening as in a true Bond adventure—but it has some priceless moments of Richard Lester-like mod filmmaking. (The director is Jay Roach.) And Elizabeth Hurley, as the spy who helps Powers make the transition to the nineties, has a fine, dry way of setting up Myers's better jokes, much as Barbara Feldon did for Don Adams in "Get Smart."—B.D. (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, Sutton, and Village Theatre VII.)

BREAKDOWN—A well-made if not particularly original highway thriller, starring Kurt Russell as a man whose wife (Kathleen Quinlan) vanishes while they're vacationing in the Southwest. The director, Jonathan Mostow, milks a lot of anxiety out of dusty desert roads and creepy diners, building a fine suspense machine as Russell, in an impressive performance, tracks a menacing trucker (J. T. Walsh) who may be responsible for his wife's disappearance. The film's leisurely pace—its very casualness—is the key to its success. By eliminating fancy camera setups and unnecessary dialogue, Mostow (who co-wrote the script with Sam Montgomery) delivers a neat, streamlined (and gratifyingly unhyped) summer flick.—B.D. (Astor Plaza, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Waverly.)

BROKEN ENGLISH—A fierce début by a New Zealand director, Gregor Nicholas. The core of the movie's energy is Nina (Aleksandra Vujcic), a young Croatian woman who escapes the war in the former Yugoslavia to join the rest of her family in Auckland. Her dedication to sex and booze certainly marks her as a free spirit, but standing firmly in her path is her terrifying father (Rade Serbedzija), who is particularly incensed by the complexities of her love life: she decides to marry a Chinese immigrant for money while having an affair with a Maori. Such racial and sexual mixups have often been fodder for farce, but Nicholas is too doomy and anguished to let humor spoil the mood. The best reason to stay with the picture is Vujcic (this is her début, too): only the depth of her brooding and her chronic urge to break away stop the film from descending into rant.—A.L. (5/12/97) (Angelika Film Center.)

CHASING AMY—In Kevin Smith's low-budget comedy, a young comic-book artist (Ben Affleck) falls in love with a pretty, vivacious blonde (Joey Lauren Adams), who is, inconveniently, a lesbian. Smith doesn't have the skill to maintain a pleasurable sense of anticipation for an entire movie; this picture, his third, is as crummy-looking and as sluggishly paced as his début feature, the 1994 "Clerks."—T.R. (4/7/97) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, Lincoln Square, and Orpheum VII.)

CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION—This odd and fractured black comedy, a first feature from the Australian director Peter Duncan, is, you might say, too original for its own good: Duncan spends so much time trying to be different that he's in constant danger of losing the thread. Still, the basic conceit is sharp and appealing. In the nineteen-fifties, at a party conference in Moscow, a devoted Australian Communist (Judy Davis) meets Joseph Stalin (F. Murray Abraham), who in the course of an interesting evening woos her, impregnates her, and dies on her. She raises her child, Joe (Richard Roxburgh), as if he were the true son of her sad and exhausted husband (Geoffrey Rush). The adult Joe cultivates both a mustache and a set of implacable attitudes, which leave us in no doubt about his genetic inheritance. The film is a frenzy of newsreels, stills, slow motion, and mock interviews, although its best moments are, arguably, the quiet, shabby scenes of family life. Davis is as funny and fidgety as ever, and Rush gives a delicate picture of moral defeat, but Abraham is a vulgar disaster: if Stalin is a complete joke, what is there to be scared of?—A.L. (5/12/97) (62nd & Broadway and Village East Cinemas.)

THE DESIGNATED MOURNER—David Hare's film records, austerely, the original stage production of an austere play by Wallace Shawn. The main character is a lapsed intellectual named Jack (Mike Nichols), who, in long passages of direct address to the audience, explains the process by which he has transformed himself from an insecure highbrow into an oddly contented lowbrow—how, that is, he has managed to empty his spirit of aspiration and human feeling, and to narrow his expectations to the single, simple animal comfort of survival. The only other speakers are his wife (Miranda Richardson) and her father (David de Keyser), a famous poet who is being persecuted by a repressive government. They're smug, haughty, and self-congratulatory; compared with them, Jack seems refreshingly honest and down to earth. But, despite Nichols's charm and virtuosity, there's never a chance that the audience for this obviously highbrow production might actually sympathize with the monstrous Jack. He remains a purely literary creature, and, in the end, fails to disturb the certainties of the liberal, educated viewer.—T.R. (5/19/97) (Angelika Film Center and 68th St. Playhouse.)

The English Patient—Written and directed by Anthony Minghella, from the novel by Michael Ondaatje, this long and searching movie tangles together a number of stories and characters: Almásy (Ralph Fiennes) and Katharine (Kristin Scott Thomas), who have an affair in North Africa before the Second World War; a French-Canadian nurse (Juliette Binoche) who cares for the badly burned Almásy after the war, and the Sikh soldier (Naveen Andrews) *she* has an affair with; and the mysterious Caravaggio (Willem Dafoe), a scavenging thief who appears to know the secrets of Almásy's past. The triumph of the film lies not just in the force and range of the performances but in Minghella's creation of an intimate epic: vast landscapes mingle with the minute details of desire, and the combination is transfixing.—A.L. (11/25/96) (Embassy 3 and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Fathers' Day—In Ivan Reitman's comedy (a remake of the poky, tolerably entertaining 1983 French farce "Les Compères"), Robin Williams and Billy Crystal join forces to look for a missing teen-age boy (Charlie Hofheimer), each of them believing that the runaway might be his son. The stars work together very gracefully; both obviously enjoy being part of a well-tuned, quietly efficient comedy team. But the humor is fatally compromised by baby-boomer sentimentality about parenthood (and dulled even further by the Perry Como-ish languor of Reitman's direction). The movie is so warm and cozy and leisurely that you yearn for Williams and Crystal to stop being so professional and responsible—to do something that might disturb its placid surface. Also with Nastassja Kinski and Julia Louis-Dreyfus. The screenplay is by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel.—T.R. (5/19/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

Fetishes—Nick Broomfield's documentary about professional dominatrices at a bondage parlor in New York City. (Cinema Village.)

The Fifth Element—A New York City cabdriver (Bruce Willis) is the hero of a futuristic story of good versus evil. With Milla Jovovich, Gary Oldman, Ian Holm, and Chris Tucker. Directed by Luc Besson. (Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

Flamenco—A documentary-cum-love letter to the wizardly singing, dancing, and guitar playing of the Gypsies of southern Spain. Carlos Saura has gathered dozens of performers and had them do their thing in front of an exquisitely simple white backdrop. He relies on Vittorio Storaro's rich cinematography and, of course, on the inherent passion of the genre to hold our interest, and most of the time they do—though the endless succession of numbers sometimes feels like too much of a good thing.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Grosse Pointe Blank—The screenplay has a high-concept premise: professional hit man goes home to attend his tenth high-school reunion. Both the star, John Cusack, and the director, George Armitage, appear to have the sense to play the outrageous material straight, and the opening half hour consists of a series of terrific revue-type sketches; the killer's session with his very reluctant psychiatrist (Alan Arkin) is a classic routine. But gradually the film's poker-faced manner begins to lose its novelty; the picture stalls, and then starts to coast downhill, apparently unaware that the motor has stopped running. Also with Minnie Driver, Dan Aykroyd, Joan Cusack, Jeremy Piven, and Hank Azaria.—T.R. (4/21/97) (84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Twin, Embassy 2, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII. . . . ¶ Cinema 3rd Avenue; through May 22.)

Irma Vep—Olivier Assayas has fun with the pretensions of French cinema in this mostly charming lampoon of filmmaking. The plot concerns a troubled director (Jean-Pierre Léaud) whose insistence on casting the Hong Kong superstar Maggie Cheung (playing herself) in his remake of the classic French silent "Les Vampires" brings him close to ruin. (Cheung, whose costume for the feature is a tight black latex cat-woman suit, falls in love with the character she's playing and begins living her real life like a movie.) Assayas dramatizes the movie set with some nicely drawn minor characters; Nathalie Richard, as a wardrobe mistress with a crush on Cheung, is particularly sweet. Echoes of French films, especially Truffaut's, run rampant, but the humor is never vindictive. The cinematic tricks (handheld cameras, odd sound effects, and so forth) don't always work, and some of the script's eccentricities seem gratuitously highbrow, but there's some fun to be had here. In French and English.—B.D. (Film Forum 3.)

GISELLE POTTER

Opening May 23, Victoire Thivisol in "Ponette."

Kolya—A likable enough Czech reworking of a tried-and-true formula: a sort of "Kramer vs. Kramer" set in Prague, in 1988-89, at the dawn of the Velvet Revolution. The screenwriter, Zdenek Sverak, also plays the central character, a bachelor cellist who suddenly finds himself responsible for an adorable Russian five-year-old. The cellist slowly grows out of his selfishness, and his love for this child who doesn't speak his language points to the new, boundaryless world that's about to open up. Directed by Jan Sverak. In Czech.—S.K. (First & 62nd Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Liar Liar—Tom Shadyac's movie stars Jim Carrey as a lying lawyer whose life is upended when his five-year-old son makes a birthday wish that, for exactly one day, his father will be incapable of telling a lie. As he peels away the layers of venal charm, you wait to discover an even more pungent venality beneath. Instead—guess what—he turns out to be a nice guy, and you feel let down when he finally surrenders to the forces of mush. But it's touching to find a director who believes in all sincerity that jokes about gas and pimples are, and always will be, inherently funny.—A.L. (3/31/97) (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, National Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and 34th Street Showplace.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—Terrence McNally's adaptation of his 1994 play, about eight gay men who spend three summer weekends together in the country. Directed by Joe Mantello. (Cinema II, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Village Theatre VII.)

Murder at 1600—Wesley Snipes and Diane Lane star as a detective and a Secret Service agent investigating a homicide at a well-known Washington address, in a thriller directed by Dwight Little. (Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, and Orpheum VII.)

Night Falls on Manhattan—A Manhattan district attorney (Andy Garcia) finds his idealism clashing with political realities, in a film written and directed by Sidney Lumet. Also starring Richard Dreyfuss, Lena Olin, and Ian Holm. (Chelsea West, East 85th Street, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, State, 34th St. East, and Waverly.)

La Promesse—In Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's drama, a fifteen-year-old boy's promise to a dying worker brings him into conflict with his ruthless father. In French. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Romy and Michele's High School Reunion—Two ditzes (Mira Sorvino and Lisa Kudrow), best friends since childhood, go to their tenth-year high-school reunion determined to prove that they're no longer losers. It's easy to see why someone thought an idiot buddy movie with girls was a fresh idea, but, while the stars are intensely likable, the writing isn't clever enough or daringly stupid enough to produce big laughs. Directed by David Mirkin.—S.K. (84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Twin, Embassy 1, Gotham Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas.)

Sprung—A comedy about a true love whose course does not run smooth, starring Rusty Cundieff (who also directed) and Joe Torry as guys on the make, and Tisha Campbell and Paula Jai Parker as the women they set their sights on. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Van—A couple of of middle-aged Dubliners (Colm Meaney and Donal O'Kelly) find their friendship challenged when they go into business selling fish and chips from a van, in a movie adapted by Roddy Doyle from the final novel of his Barrytown Trilogy ("The Commitments" and "The Snapper" were the others) and directed by Stephen Frears. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Angelika Film Center, Cinema I, and Regency.)

Volcano—Tommy Lee Jones stars as the director of L.A.'s emergency-management team, who is trying to sluice some boiling lava into the sea; in the process he meets a seismologist, perkily played by Anne Heche, who helps explain just what a volcanic eruption is, though mainly she keeps shouting to stand back from the lava flow. The film is poorly written, and it has little suspense (most of the characters, strangely enough, don't get fried) and less humor, but—unlike this year's earlier volcanic blowout, "Dante's Peak"—it has fast, no-nonsense pacing and an impressive number of camera setups. The director, Mick Jackson, keeps the effects moving along, and, the audience may warm to the movie as a good amusement-park ride.—B.D. (Chelsea West, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through May 22.)

ALSO PLAYING

ALL OVER ME: Angelika Film Center. . . . **BOOTY CALL:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **BROTHERS IN TROUBLE:** Film Forum. . . . **A BROTHER'S KISS:** Chelsea Cinemas. . . . **A CHEF IN LOVE:** Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **COMMANDMENTS:** Beekman and Chelsea Cinemas. . . . **THE DAYTRIPPERS** (reviewed in our issue of 3/24/97): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **DIARY OF A SEDUCER:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **FEMALE PERVERSIONS:** Quad Cinema. . . . **FOOLS RUSH IN:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **JERRY MAGUIRE** (12/16/96): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **KAMA SUTRA:** Angelika 57. . . . **LOST HIGHWAY** (3/10/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **MOTHER:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **NOWHERE:** Quad Cinema. . . . **RUDYARD KIPLING'S THE SECOND JUNGLE BOOK: MOWGLI AND BALOO:** Guild, Lincoln Square, 64th & 2nd, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **THE SAINT** (4/14/97): Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and State. . . . **SLING BLADE:** Art Greenwich Twin, Carnegie Hall Cinemas, and Manhattan Twin. . . . **TWIN TOWN:** Village Theatre VII. . . . **WARRIORS OF VIRTUE:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, and First & 62nd Cinemas. . . . **WHEN WE WERE KINGS** (2/17/97): 59th Street East Cinema.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.
Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy I, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Manhattan Twin, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
68th St. Playhouse, Third Ave. at 68th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter (1994)—Deborah Hoffmann keeps theatricality to a minimum in this succinct documentary about her bond with her Alzheimer's-beset mother. Only quaint title cards and an occasional visual coup (such as a pile of packed suitcases revealing their innards one by one) alleviate the film's spareness. But this matter-of-factness becomes a mode of honor as Hoffmann treats subjects like her mother's easier acceptance of her lesbianism. Hoffmann's ultimate insight that a person can retain her definition as an individual even without a memory (and thus without a past) crowns an honest quest for understanding.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; May 27.)

Despair (1977)—The antihero (Dirk Bogarde), a half-Russian émigré in thirties Germany who owns a chocolate factory, becomes so disgusted with his life that he tries to steal the identity of an out-of-work actor he sees as his twin; actually, the man looks little like him. Working from Tom Stoppard's faithful adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov's novel, Rainer Werner Fassbinder turns the movie into a poor cousin of "Cabaret"—a cautionary tale of amoral and/or impotent men paving the way for Nazism. Although Bogarde gives it his all, the ineptitude of his co-stars (particularly Andrea Ferreol, as his wife) leaves him looking mugged. And the jarring, elaborate visual style (Michael Ballhaus did the cinematography) makes the drama seem like nothing more than a fancy excuse to exploit a neurotic mood.—M.S. (Walter Reade Theatre; May 25-26.)

Dirigible (1931)—A fraternity-of-the-air adventure about the professional and romantic rivalry of a zeppelin skipper (Jack Holt) and a biplane daredevil (Ralph Graves). Fay Wray doesn't have a clue to the role of the daredevil's clinging wife, who flirts with the skipper when her husband won't agree to settle down. But the director, Frank Capra, provides an exciting inside-out look at the huge, gorgeous floating stogies. (The prime location was the U.S. Naval Air Station at Lakehurst, New Jersey, where the Hindenburg was to burst into flame in 1937.) And, despite the surrounding hokum, he makes the climactic conquest of the South Pole frighteningly real. (As Capra related in his autobiography, you can see the frosty breath of the team cook, Clarence Muse, thanks to a dry-ice cage planted in the actor's mouth.) Dorothy Howell and Jo Swerling did the script, from a story by Lieutenant Commander Frank Wead, U.S.N.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; May 21.)

Ladies of Leisure (1930)—Though she came from the theatre, Barbara Stanwyck seemed to have an intuitive understanding of the fluid physical movements that work best on camera; perhaps she had been an unusually "natural" actress even onstage. This was her first big hit in the movies. Under Frank Capra's direction, she plays a tough "party" girl (euphemism for call girl) who poses for a wealthy young artist (Ralph Graves); he sees in her the spirituality that she attempts to deny. The story is a museum piece of early-talkies sentimentality, but, in a way, that only emphasizes Stanwyck's remarkable modernism.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; May 22.)

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)—Frank Capra-style folk humor is better in slightly shorter doses (this runs almost two hours and the pace could be quicker), but there's no use fighting one's enjoyment of this homey fantasy demonstrating the triumph of small-town values over big-city cynicism. Gary Cooper is Longfellow Deeds, the sincere greeting-card poet from New England who comes to New York; Jean Arthur is the wiseacre newspaperwoman who starts out by making a public joke of him and then falls in love with him.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; May 23-25.)

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)—James Stewart is the naïve small-town hero sent to the Senate; Jean Arthur is the knowing secretary who is at first horrified by his simplicity. When the young Senator's illusions are shattered, he stages a filibuster, defeats the villains, and reëstablishes the whole government on a firm and honorable basis. No one else can balance the ups and downs of wistful sentiment and corny humor the way Capra can—but if anyone else should learn to, kill him.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; May 23-25.)

Mommie Dearest (1981)—The best that can be said about this jumbled scrapbook of Joan Crawford's life from her middle years to the end is that it doesn't seem to get in the way of its star, Faye Dunaway, who gives a startling, ferocious performance. She invests the role with so much power and suffering that the camp horror scenes—the nocturnal rampages—transcend camp. (These destruction orgies were the most talked-about episodes in the book by Crawford's adopted daughter, Christina, on which the movie is based.) Directed by Frank Perry.—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; May 25.)

The Quiet Man (1952)—One of John Ford's most popular films—but fearfully Irish and green and hearty. John Wayne plays an American prizefighter who returns to Ireland and courts a ripe, fiery beauty, Maureen O'Hara. In the best scene, on the morning after the wedding, the fighter's driver (Barry Fitzgerald) comes in through the smashed bedroom door and looks at the broken-down bed, and says something indecipherable that sounds like "Impetuous! Homeric!" Filmed in Ireland and at Republic Pictures.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; May 24-25.)

Rio Bravo (1959)—Howard Hawks directed this semi-satiric Western pastiche (mainly of old Hawks movies), with John Wayne, Dean Martin (as a drunk), Ricky Nelson, Walter Brennan, and Angie Dickinson. Jules Furthman and Leigh Brackett provided the script, Dmitri Tiomkin the score. Silly, but with zest; there are some fine action sequences, and the performers seem to be enjoying their roles.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; May 27.)

The Strong Man (1926)—At the time this picture (his best) came out, Harry Langdon—innocent, moronic, saintly, cunning—was widely held to be in the class of Chaplin, Keaton, and Lloyd. He plays a Belgian soldier in the First World War who has become a pen pal of an American girl and comes to find her after the war; he eventually has to clean out the corrupt town she lives in. At one point he falls into the grip of a tough broad who is trying to steal some money from the lining of his coat; he misinterprets her action and gives a glorious rendition of outraged virtue. Written and directed by Frank Capra. Silent.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; May 26.)

Why We Fight: The Battle of Britain (1943)—To varying degrees, entries 4, 5, and 6 in Frank Capra's series of Second World War documentaries offer tributes to the national characters of America's allies pulled together from feature films and propaganda. Some obvious stitchwork undermines this rendering of the R.A.F.'s victory in the air above England and the citizenry's fortitude on (and below) the bombed-out ground. Stirring dogfights and eerie shots of raids and conflagrations compete with too many corny acted-out vignettes celebrating the pluck of the people, as though the luxury of sharing a common language had lulled Capra into creative complacency.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; May 27.)

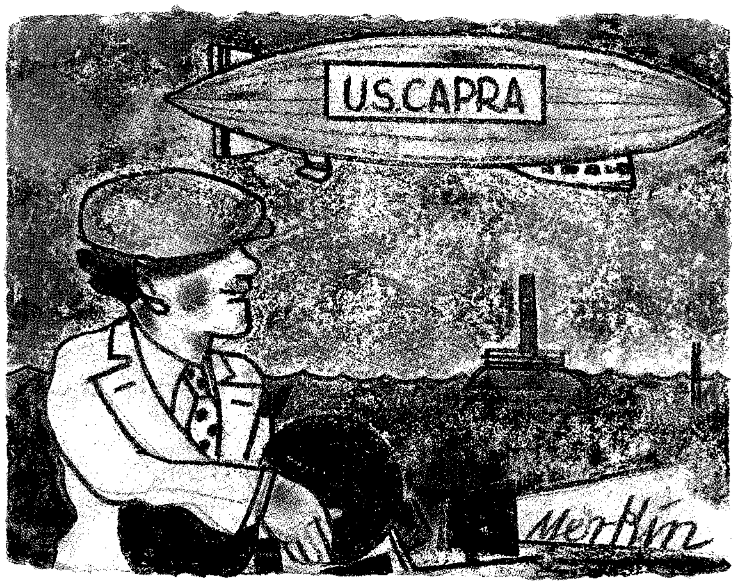
Why We Fight: The Battle of Russia (1943)—Scenes from Eisenstein's "Alexander Nevsky" offering historical precedent to the Soviets' resistance of the Teutonic invaders dominate the first part of Frank Capra's epic documentary. But as the film chronicles the siege of Leningrad and the street-by-street fighting for Stalingrad, it generates a power all its own. No excess of cutaways to national oaths and anthems and prayers could dilute the near-apocalyptic impact of a lifeline of supplies crossing a frozen lake, or of armies battling for their lives among urban corridors and archways.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; May 27.)

Why We Fight: The Battle of China (1944)—The splintered, gentle-giant China, on the road to unification and democracy, is mauled by the slight yet modernized Japan, in Frank Capra's account of the war in the Pacific. Necessarily more open-ended than the other "Why We Fight" films, this one crescendos with China's forging of the Burma Road, then falls into a diminuendo when the Japanese seize it. The state of China before and during the war was too complicated, both politically and militarily, to support Capra's narrow take on it; still, the documentary contains indelible images of chaos in the streets of Shanghai and of catastrophic blazes flickering on the cliffs of Chungking.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; May 27.)

and "The Body Beautiful" (1991, Ngozi Onwurah). . . . May 24 at 2:30 and May 26 at 5: "Who's Going to Pay for These Donuts, Anyway? (1992, Janice Tanaka) and "Warrior Marks" (1993, Pratibha Parmar and Alice Walker). . . . May 24 at 5 and May 26 at 2:30: "Dialogues with Madwomen" (1993, Allie Light). . . . May 27 at 3: "Which Way Is East?" (1994, Lynne Sachs) and "Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter" (†).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—May 27 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud" (1995, Claude Sautet; in French), with Emmanuelle Béart.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Films directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder. May 22 at 4 and 6 and May 23 at 9:30: "Querelle" (1982). . . . May 23 at 2 and 7 and May 24 at 4 and 9:15: "In a Year of Thirteen Moons" (1978). . . . May 23 at 4:20 and May 24 at 6:30: "Effi Briest" (1974). . . . May 25 at 4 and 8:15 and May 26 at 2 and 6: "Despair" (†). . . . May 25 at 6:30 and May 26 at 4:20 and 8:30: "The American Soldier" (1970). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. May 24-25 at 2: "The Crumbs" (1991, Sven Methling; in Danish).



At Film Forum 2, Frank Capra's "Dirigible" and "Submarine."

RICHARD MERKIN

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—A retrospective of films directed by Frank Capra. May 21: "Dirigible" (†) and "Submarine" (1928). . . . May 22: "Ladies of Leisure" (†) and "Forbidden" (1932). . . . May 23-25: "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (†) and "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" (†). . . . May 26: "The Strong Man" (†), "Soldier Man" (1928), and "Lucky Stars" (1925), all with Harry Langdon. . . . May 27: "Why We Fight: The Battle of Britain" (†), "Why We Fight: The Battle of Russia" (†), and "Why We Fight: The Battle of China" (†).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of seven John Wayne films, to commemorate what would have been his ninetieth birthday. May 22 at 2 and May 27 at 6: "The Big Trail" (1930, Raoul Walsh). . . . May 23 at 2:30 and May 24 at 5: "The Searchers" (1956, John Ford). . . . May 23 at 7 and May 25 at 2: "Rio Grande" (1950, Ford). . . . May 24 at 2 and May 25 at 5: "The Quiet Man" (†). . . . May 26 at 1: "In Harm's Way" (1965, Otto Preminger). . . . May 26 at 5: "El Dorado" (1967, Howard Hawks). . . . May 27 at 2:30: "Rio Bravo" (†). . . . ¶ May 22 at 3 and 6: "Men of the Port" (1995, Alain Tanner). . . . ¶ A program of films celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the distribution company Women Make Movies. May 23 at 3 and May 25 at 5: "Forbidden Love: The Unashamed Stories of Lesbian Lives" (1992, Aerlyn Weissman and Lynn Fernie). . . . May 23 at 6 and May 25 at 2:30: "Juggling Gender" (1992, Tami Gold) and "Guerrillas in Our Midst" (1992, Amy Harrison). . . . May 23 at 8: "The Match That Started My Fire" (1991, Cathy Cook), "Meeting of Two Queens" (1991, Cecilia Barriga), "History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige" (1991, Rea Tajiri),

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Films directed by Peter Greenaway. May 24 at 2: "The Daughtsman's Contract" (1983). . . . May 24 at 4:30: "A Zed and Two Noughts" (1986). . . . May 25 at 2: "The Falls" (1980).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—A series of musical films, each preceded by a short cabaret performance featuring the music of the film's composer and lyricist. May 27 at 7:30: Judy Malloy will sing songs by Cole Porter, followed by a screening of "Kiss Me Kate" (1953, George Sidney).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On May 25 at 7, the feature will be "Mommie Dearest" (†).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—May 21 at 6 and 7:40, May 22 at 6 and 10:20, May 23-24 at 6 and 10, May 25 at 6:20 and 10, and May 26-27 at 6 and 10: "The Incredible Shrinking Man" (1957, Jack Arnold). . . . May 21 at 9:30: "The Mandarin" (1996, Julio Bressane; in Portuguese). . . . May 22 at 8 and May 24-25 at 10: "The American Friend" (1977, Wim Wenders; in German). . . . May 22 at 10:15: "Killed the Family and Went to the Movies" (1969, Bressane; in Portuguese). . . . May 23-27 at 8: "L'Atalante" (1934, Jean Vigo; in French). . . . May 23 at 10:15: "The Angel Was Born" (1969, Bressane; in Portuguese). . . . May 27 at 7: "The Travelling Players" (1975, Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek).

Brògan
féileadh.

CONGRATULATIONS.

YOU'VE FINALLY
filled his SHOES.

HAPPY Father's DAY.

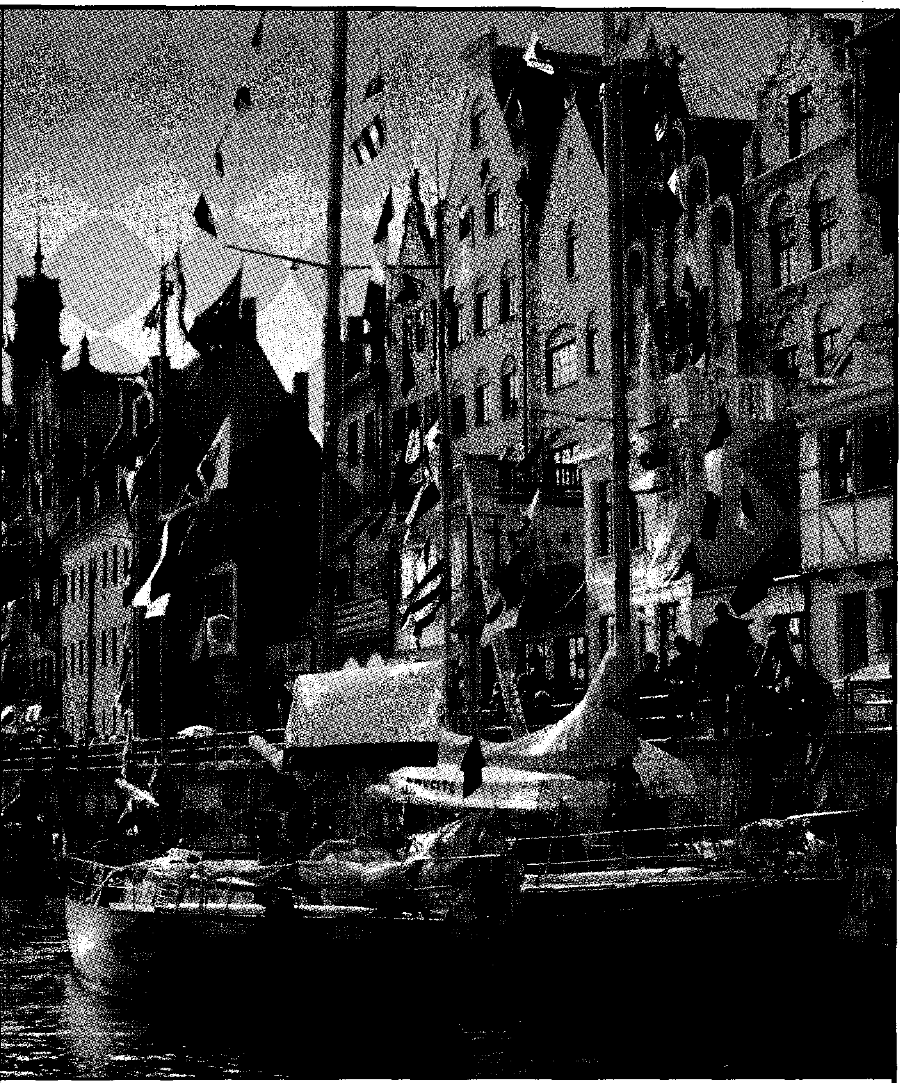
THE MACALLAN.
The Single Malt Scotch.

To join our small (but DEVOTED)
band of merry MALT sippers,
PLEASE call

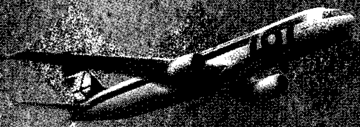
1-800-428-9810.

THE MACALLAN® Scotch Whisky. 43% alc./vol. Sole U.S. importer Rémy Amerique, Inc., New York, N.Y. © 1997 Macallan-Glenlivet P.L.C.

AN AUSSIE WALKS INTO A STORE IN POLAND, SAYS "G'DAY" TO THE SHOPKEEPER. SHE SAYS "NO, GDANSK."



"You must be here for our Millennium Celebration," she says in English, laughing at her little joke. "Gdansk's birthday party is the biggest one in Europe." "You've got quite the crowd," the Aussie smiles back. "Yes," the shopkeeper notes. "We have visitors here from all over the world." "I know," the Aussie says. "We had already planned to meet our cousins from Chicago here in Europe. And Poland was someplace that seemed a bit different. So when they suggested coming here for the Millennium, we got right on it. Quick flight for them too, since your LOT has the only nonstop flights from the States." "Yes," she smiles. "And the newest planes in the sky." The Aussie makes his purchase, and tips his hat to the shopkeeper with a quick "G'day." "No," she laughs, "Gdansk."



LOT

THE AIRLINE OF POLAND

Call your travel agent or 1-800-223-0593. Or visit http://www.lot.com

THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

INK

Philip Roth's newest fictional character unmasks himself.

The canon of parental cautions—look both ways; don't take candy from strangers; never see a buddy movie starring Chris Farley and David Spade—is silent about the perennial problem of how to avoid being written about as a fictional character. Philip Roth, in his new novel, "American Pastoral," suggests that "if you regard highly your privacy and the well-being of your loved ones, the last person to take into your confidence is a working novelist." Well, duh. In the past, even marrying Philip Roth—or actually *being* Philip Roth—hasn't warded off Philip Roth's fictionalizing eye.

But remaining a stranger to Philip Roth doesn't seem to work either. A few weeks ago, Seymour (the Swede) Masin was paging through "American Pastoral" at a Barnes & Noble and realized he'd been Rothed. All four hundred and twenty-three pages were about Seymour (the Swede) Levov, a strapping blond blue-eyed high-school sports legend from the Weequahic section of Newark. Masin, a white-haired seventy-six, had also been a strapping blond blue-eyed high-school sports legend from Weequahic—where Roth grew up a dozen years later.

"Here was this big writer writing about me," Masin said. "But I'd never met him, never spoken to him, and only read one of his books, 'Portnoy's Complaint'—it didn't thrill me. Some people said to me, 'You should sue!' Please. Roth portrayed me as a decent, good guy, which I think is unusual for him to do."

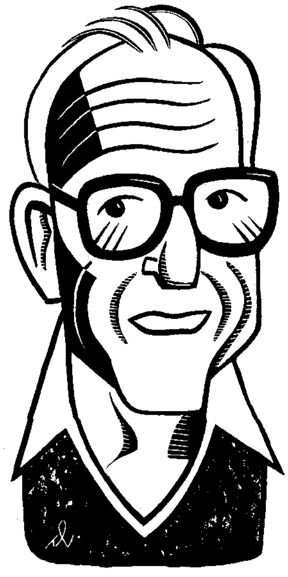
Sitting with a visitor recently in the unlit living room of the house in South Orange, New Jersey, where he has lived for forty-five years, Masin proudly paged through the scrapbook that documents his unwitting qualifications for novelization: his selection as the state's best basketball player; his state shot-put championship; his numberless triumphs in football and the low hurdles; and his artless pluck ("OUR FOOTBALL HERO HAS A VERY UNUSUAL VIRTUE CALLED MODESTY"). No wonder Roth describes Levov as "the household Apollo of the Weequahic Jews."

"A lot of people tell me, 'You're a legend!' " Masin said, waving his hands and speaking in the mild, aspirated tones of Lee Strasberg playing Hyman Roth in "The Godfather." "Please—forget about it. An athlete shouldn't stand for something large about America—he should just thank his parents for their genes."

Roth's Swede continues in grace after high school as a rich burgher living in the rural suburb of Old Rimrock, until the sixties, when his only daughter Merry blows up the post office to protest the Vietnam War. She goes into hiding, and the Swede's life is suddenly smashed to bits.

Swede Masin, meanwhile, worked as a liquor salesman for nearly fifty years and had four children, none of whom have blown anything up. But he shares Swede Levov's sense of the moment when history soured. "The Vietnam War was brutal, an error," Masin said. "So reading about Merry really hit me hard. I think I would have reacted like the Swede in the book—trying to save my daughter. It's amazing, but almost everything in the book I would have done if I'd been in those situations."

His criticisms of the book are limited to the topics of religion, sex, and death. Masin thinks the book would be better without them. "In any book I read, I wish they wouldn't write about religions, and here there's a lot about the Jewishness," he said. Roth portrays Levov's marriage to a Catholic beauty queen as a watershed of assimilation. Masin waved away a question about the meaning of his own marriage to a Catholic. "But Roth certainly got my wife right," he said. "Estelle was really a knockout—shape, personality, everything. Of course, she was only in beauty contests at swim clubs, and Roth blew her up into being Miss New Jersey."



Seymour (the Swede) Masin

The sex scenes in "American Pastoral"—"he lifted her buttocks in one hand and raised her body into his mouth," and so on—are fairly mild by Rothian standards, but they made Masin squirm. "It was a little raw, a little much on the details," he said. "And it was *me* having this sex. Just not necessary."

And Swede Levov drops dead of prostate cancer in his late sixties. "It hit me funny for a minute," Swede Masin

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT DE MICHIELL

said, "and I wished he didn't have to go. Then I realized it's a book of fiction, so Roth probably wanted to finish the character off, make his point. But I'm still around, if anyone's interested."

—Tad Friend

IT'S YOUR FUNERAL

Seven mere mortals dictate the terms of their final sendoffs.

Many friends and admirers of the journalist Murray Kempton, who died on May 5th, at the age of seventy-nine, were moved by the simple instructions he left behind for his funeral: the Order for the Burial of the Dead prescribed by the 1559 Book of Common Prayer; "the Sanctus and the Agnus Dei from the Byrd Three-Part Mass and the Purcell Funerary Verses"; no flowers; and, pointedly humbling for the many representatives of the chattering classes in attendance, no speeches. Here's what some members of the living have to say about their own last rites.

McCourt

Wasserstein

Beene

•

Frank McCourt, author of "Angela's Ashes": "I want to be cremated, and my ashes taken by my wife and friends back to Ireland. Outside Limerick there's a castle on a hill called Carrigogunnell. There they will fling my ashes from the highest battlement while a piper plays 'I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby.' There's to be no black, only ribaldry."

•

Wendy Wasserstein, playwright: "It has to be at Temple Emanu-El—please!—with the overture to 'Gypsy' and Lynne Thigpen singing 'Everything's Coming Up Roses.' Maybe André Bishop could speak in that beautiful voice of his, and my mother could dance. There is the nightmare, of course, that someone will sing 'I Shall Be Released,' and your best friends will get up and say, 'When I first met Wendy, I . . . ,' and talk about themselves for two hours."

•

Peter J. Gomes, Harvard University chaplain and author of "The Good Book": "I want the whole nine yards, in church. I want the casket to be on view. I don't want to be cremated, and I want a big coffin, to be carried in by eight sturdy friends. I want the Book of Common Prayer read over me in stirring tones, and a good address, and splendid hymns. And then I want people to go with me to the graveyard and watch me be lowered into the ground. Above all, I want them to know I'm dead. I want no euphemisms, no softening of the rough edges of death. I want them to mourn, I want them to wear black. Then I want them to go have a good party."

•

Mary Gordon, novelist: "It will be at the Holy Cross Catholic Church on Forty-second Street, across from the Port Authority. I want absolutely nobody saying anything about me. The music should be the Pie Jesu from Fauré's Requiem, a plainsong Dies Irae, and end with Martha and the Vandellas' 'Dancing in the Streets.' "

•

Elaine Kaufman, restaurateur: "Pete Hamill has all the notes about mine—a bunch of us sat around one night about ten years ago and talked about our funerals. I said I wanted to be cooked—uh, cremated. And no ceremony. I'd just rather leave an endowed chair of literature at Columbia. For writers."

•

Geoffrey Beene, designer: "There will be monies for my closest friends or other associates to go to the best restaurant of their choice and celebrate. A lot of my friends are food critics and lovers of food, so whatever they choose will be superb—not so much chichi as superb. I won't have music, none of that. It's all over then, so why carry on?"

•

Andrew Wylie, literary agent: "I've always thought I'd be immortal."

—Celia McGee

RAG TRADE

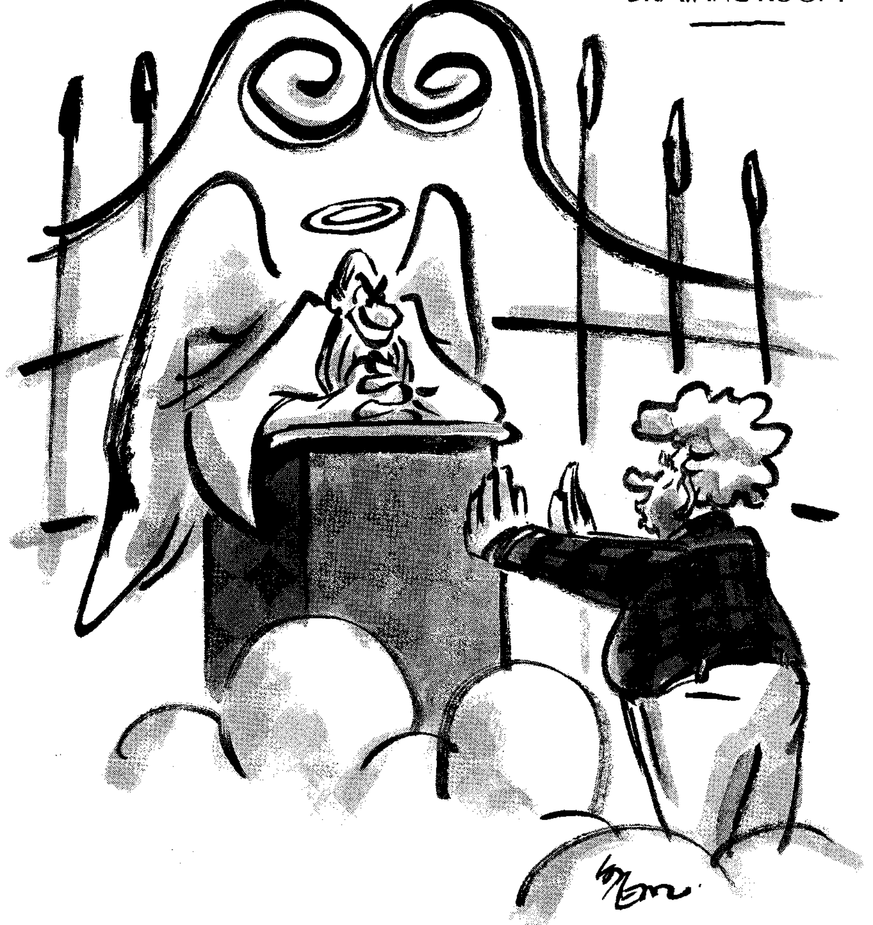
A computer can beat a human at chess, but would it ever dare mix checks, stripes, and plaid?

Maybe it has something to do with staring, Zen-like, at sixty-four squares for five-hour stretches, but chess guys can't seem to get enough of plaid. And checks. And, for the rakish, houndstooth. During last week's match between Garry Kasparov and I.B.M.'s Deep Blue, the scene in the pressroom on the fiftieth floor of the Equitable Center in midtown Manhattan resembled less a gathering of the chess world than the annual convention of the Plaid Society. Blame it on Kasparov. For Games Three and Four, both draws, he wore a blue windowpane-plaid jacket, with echt-European side vents, and mustard pants. For Game Five, he upped the pattern ante a notch, appearing in a lush taupe plaid *suit.* Twice the plaid. Meanwhile, the *Times*' chess writer Robert Byrne shuffled nattily around in a sports coat of an overlapping forest-green, brown, and rust weave, keeping track of the games on a small pocket chessboard.

The most daring plaid booster had to be Kasparov's computer guru, Frederic Friedel, a goateed philosophy graduate, who attended Game Five in a green-and-white microcheck jacket and a diagonally striped tie. By the endgame on Saturday, the houndstooth count was hovering at six, though there were some dissenters from the trend of sartorial geometry. A willowy female reporter from Turkey wore a long coat of creamy vanilla leather. Several grand masters remained devoted to pre-glasnost expatriate bohemian duds, including the nettlesome V-neck-sweater-and-loosened-tie combination. It was the I.B.M. Deep Blue team, however, who posed the greatest threat to the plaid vibe, just as their machine seemed poised to spoil Kasparov's supremacy. Crisscross motifs gave way to solids, intersections were superseded by pinstripes. And what color did the handlers from I.B.M. favor? That would be navy blue.

—Matt DeBord

DRAWING ROOM



"Hold it! I only look like Norman Mailer."

THE BENCH

A legal tussle among the violas at New York City Ballet.

FOR some years, there has been unpleasantness in the string section of the orchestra of New York City Ballet. Recently, the trouble has erupted into full-scale legal war, and the scene of battle has shifted from the pit of the New York State Theatre to federal district court in Manhattan. Susan Pray, Barbara Baird, and Liane Marston have all played viola in the orchestra for more than fifteen years. During that time, they have worked within inches of Laurance Fader, the associate principal violist. Fader and the three women, it seems clear, have not gotten along for years, and last November Pray, Baird, and Marston sued New York City Ballet, alleging that it "knowingly tolerated a work place permeated with hostility toward women"—specifically, sexual harassment by Fader.

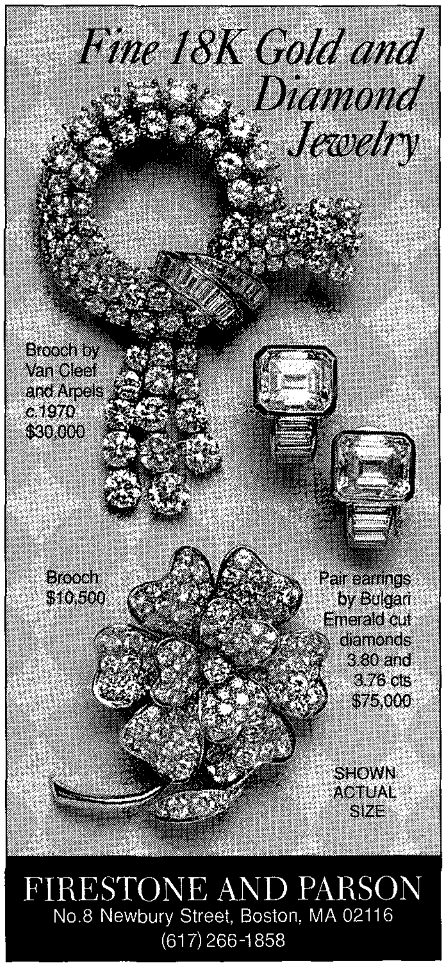
In their complaint the violists charge that Fader has long intimidated them and other women in the orchestra "by glaring at them, by making inappropriate body movements, comments, grunting, sucking and 'tsh tsh' noises at them, by physically obstructing passage in the hallways and blocking access in and out of the viola section." The violists say that they and other female musicians have complained about Fader for years. As far back as 1985, they note, five women in the orchestra told the then managing director about Fader's obnoxious behavior, which ranged, they charge, from "inappropriate stares to [his] grabbing and fondling his genitals, and appearing in various stages of undress." In early 1994, the ballet appointed an attorney to investigate Fader's behavior, and that April the ballet sent him a warning memo, demanding that he stop criticizing other musicians' abilities in an unprofessional manner. The women say that the warning accomplished nothing.

The ballet's answer to the complaint is not exactly a wholehearted defense of Fader; it sounds more like the peevishness of a fed-up parent who has been called to the school principal's office a few times too many to discuss Junior's problems. The ballet acknowledges that it has received complaints about Fader's behavior from both men and women, but points out that "in response to these complaints the Ballet has admonished Fader, warned him to watch his behavior, asked him to apologize in certain cases, and suspended him." Through its lawyer, N.Y.C.B. describes the suit as arising from "a dispute among several orchestra members." The women's lawyer, Janice Goodman, sees it otherwise. "The ballet let this environment go on this way for years," she said last week, "and they have to take responsibility for it."

The ballet's orchestra isn't just any collection of musicians. It was, of course, the company's founding genius, George Balanchine, who revolutionized ballet by suggesting that music alone, without a narrative, could inspire great dance. So it's especially disheartening for ballet insiders to see this controversy on top of recurring artistic complaints about the orchestra—currently, all musicians are not even contractually required to attend rehearsals.

Both sides have been busy in recent weeks taking colorful depositions from one another, but no trial date has been set and no settlement appears likely soon. The three plaintiffs, fearing retaliation from Fader, who is a union representative, have declined to talk about the case. Fader himself denies that he has done anything wrong. "I did not, and have not, harassed these people," he said. Through all the years of hostility—and even now, as the ballet rehearses for this week's performance of Balanchine's "Stravinsky Violin Concerto"—the four violists have continued to work side by side in the dim light of the pit, playing for as many as eight performances a week. Goodman said, "As far as my clients are concerned, Fader's behavior has been masked a bit but has not substantially changed." The associate principal violist insists that he has no reason to change. In one respect, then, Fader speaks for everyone involved when he says, "The whole thing is extremely unpleasant. It's bad. There's no question about it."

—JEFFREY TOOBIN


Fine 18K Gold and Diamond Jewelry
Brooch by Van Cleef and Arpels c.1970 $30,000
Brooch $10,500
Pair earrings by Bulgari Emerald cut diamonds 3.80 and 3.76 cts $75,000
SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE
FIRESTONE AND PARSON
No.8 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116
(617) 266-1858

CAPE COD
Seashore Galore
and, a whole lot more!
White sand beaches, quiet harbors and quaint villages, whale watch cruises, historic sites, museums, attractions, golf, antiquing. Cape Cod, where you always find seashore and….a whole lot more.
Write or call for our free Accommodations Directory.
CAPE COD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
P.O.Box 16, Hyannis 9, MA 02601-0016
(508) 362-3225 ~ http://www.capecod.com
We'd love to show you around.
MASSACHUSETTS

COUNTRY WALKERS
19 Years of excellence in Worldwide Walking Vacations
◆ Europe, Africa, North & South America and the South Pacific
◆ Expert local guides
Free catalog call 800-464-9255

LONDON FLATS
Short Term – Privately owned
COTSWOLD COTTAGES
THE LONDON CONNECTION
MR. THOMAS MOORE III
TOLL FREE PHONE: 888-393-9120
FAX: 801-393-3024
E-MAIL: london@relia.net

THE POLITICAL SCENE

SOLID-GOLD DISH

What's behind Regnery Publishing's sudden best-sellers?

BY JANE MAYER

ON a recent sunny afternoon in Washington, in an office just down the hill from the United States Capitol, a mild-mannered man with thinning hair and somewhat glassy blue eyes sat at a cluttered desk, meditating on the outer limits of taste in the publishing of political books. Alfred S. Regnery, the heir to a small and influential publishing firm, had recently launched several controversial best-sellers—including Mark Fuhrman's "Murder in Brentwood"—and now had another hot prospect to consider: a typed manuscript purporting to be a memoir disguised as fiction, by a Texas lawyer who claimed to have had a two-decade-long affair with Bill Clinton. The manuscript, which had already been rejected by a great many major publishing houses in New York, had finally reached the more specialized quarters of Regnery Publishing, an independent firm that ever since its founding, in 1947, has been associated with the political right.

Forty years ago, the company published books that became staples of the American conservative canon, notably William F. Buckley, Jr.,'s "God and Man at Yale," in 1951, and Russell Kirk's "The Conservative Mind," in 1953. But in more modern times the Regnery list has taken a turn toward the tabloid. It has kept its place on the edge of conservative debate by emphasizing not so much the philosophical as the personal, and thereby becoming, at least in some instances, a house of last resort.

Recent titles suggest a particular obsession with President Clinton: Regnery authors have portrayed him as a conscienceless politician whose rise to power and conduct in office have been marked by unprecedented levels of immorality, indecency, and even criminality. Not surprisingly, a number of the company's political books have been denounced as irresponsible. The adjective "vile" has been applied by the historian Garry Wills to describe "Unlimited Access," which is a purported exposé of the Clinton White House written by Gary Aldrich, an F.B.I. agent formerly assigned to run background checks on the Clintons' staff. Other recent books with a special focus on the Administration include R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.,'s "Boy Clinton" and Meredith Oakley's "On the Make: The Rise of Bill Clinton." A biography of Vice-President Al Gore, scheduled for publication in time for the next Presidential campaign, is to be written by the ABC News correspondent Bob Zelnick, who describes his own political leanings as "a stripe or two to the right of the mainstream."

It seemed plausible, then, that a memoir by a putative Presidential mistress would find a home at Regnery. But this time the company's namesake and president was taking the high road. "Are we going to publish a book that just talks about whom Clinton slept with?" Regnery asked, casually spreading the calumny as he chatted. "I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole." One reason is that, given the accounts of Clinton's private life that his company and others have already published, a novel by a self-proclaimed mistress, he explained, "isn't particularly newsworthy." Besides, he added, "it's far below our standards."

The news that Regnery had dismissed the novel as beneath the firm's standards was greeted with derision by the book's agent, Lucianne Goldberg, a New Yorker who specializes in representing conservative authors. The only reason Regnery wouldn't publish it is that it was fiction, Goldberg told me. "If the author had been willing to bite the bullet and tell it as nonfiction, he would have published it in a minute!" she said.

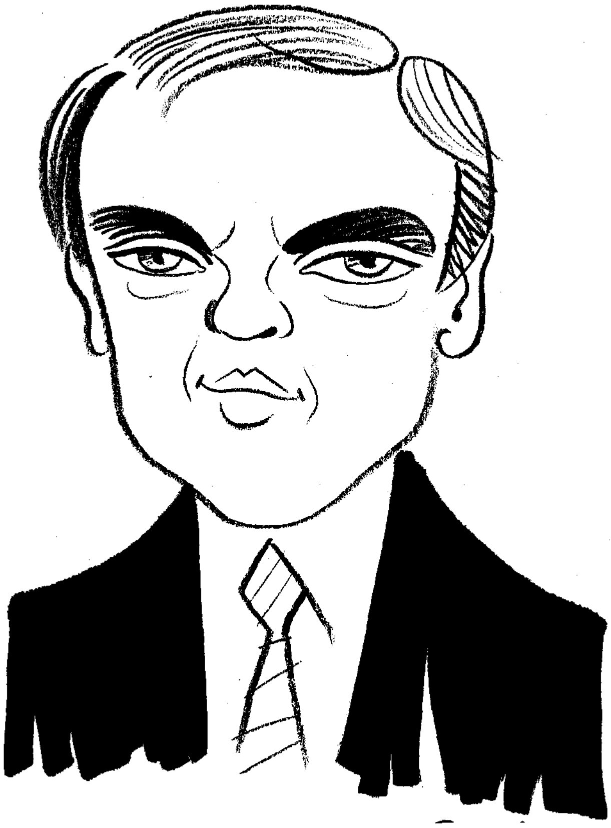
Fiction or not, Regnery's list is a reminder not only that the American marketplace continues to welcome books with a rightish agenda but that attacking the Clintons is good business. The Clintons "have been the Fort Knox of the right," Roger Craver, the head of Craver, Mathews, Smith, a major Washington-area political direct-mail firm, said not long ago. And the right is a big market: Craver estimates the number of conservative donors at between nine and twelve million. Many of them are reachable through direct mail, talk radio, the Internet, and book clubs. Regnery, which employs only eighteen people, has proved unusually adept at exploiting all these media. Indeed, Regnery told me that no prospective author of a topical book got a signed contract until executives of the firm had assessed the author's potential skill at breaking into what he calls "the public conversation."

On the right, where mainstream publishing is suspected of being a liberal cartel, Alfred Regnery is a sort of hero. His success at getting his authors on the air and into bookstores is nothing short of "a breakthrough," according to Howard Phillips, the chairman of the Conservative Caucus. But elsewhere the publisher is regarded as stretching political discourse to the breaking point. Jason Epstein, a top editor at Random House, suggests that the people at Regnery call themselves conservatives but are in fact "right-wing anarchists." Even some fellow-conservatives share this opinion. John Roberts, a Republican media consultant, argued—successfully—that Aldrich be kept off John McLaughlin's television show because Aldrich's book, he thought, was "irresponsible." He told me, "There's a role to play in producing books that are popular and will tell people the truth no one else will. But the key word is 'truth.' "

ALFRED S. REGNERY is an unlikely anarchist. At fifty-four, he is a man of nineteenth-century tastes and manners, a lawyer by training, whose hobbies run to playing the cello and woodworking. When he takes issue with his detractors, he does so politely, like a disappointed prep-school headmaster.

"Quality, truth, certainly honesty count," Regnery assured me the other day in his office. "After all, my name goes on the back of all of these books. The thing I dislike the most is having people accuse me of publishing books that either aren't accurate or have mistakes or lots of typos in them. We're very concerned about accuracy and quality here."

It must have been painful, then, for Regnery to learn that one of his authors, Gary Aldrich, whose "Unlimited Access" has sold some half a million copies, no longer vouches for the accuracy of his own book. "Unlimited Access," which is based almost entirely on anonymous sources, depicts life inside the Clinton White House as a fevered, hyperactive erotic fantasia (though the book's language is joylessly prissy). The many unsubstantiated allegations in the book include the charge that Hillary Rodham Clinton had an affair with the former White House deputy counsel Vincent Foster (a secondhand rumor that was also printed in the Tyrrell book); that her staff hung pornographic Christmas ornaments on the White House tree; that lesbian White House staffers frolicked in the White House showers; and that gay male staffers had sex in West Wing offices.



Alfred Regnery: His press seems to have developed a set of journalistic rules all its own.

ROBERT RISKO

Many correspondents have had difficulty finding anything of interest to write about inside the Clinton White House, but Aldrich makes the ship of state sound like an X-rated cruise, complete with "one well-endowed lady" staffer who "had trouble keeping her breasts from tumbling out of her blouse" and another staffer, supposedly espied by Hillary Clinton, who exposed her bare bottom on the White House grounds. According to Aldrich, the Clintons even installed totemic sexual fetishes in Jackie Kennedy's Rose Garden. A new sculpture, which Aldrich describes with horror as "modern," was "twice life-size" and "very naked" with "enormous buttocks far out of proportion to the rest of her body."

The book's most sensational charge is that the President was in the "frequent" habit of eluding his Secret Service detail and riding, hidden under a blanket in the back of a car, to the nearby Marriott Hotel for sexual liaisons with a "female"—one, moreover, who "may be a celebrity." This was an issue of grave national security, Aldrich writes, in that it might have placed the President out of pocket—indeed, out of pants—in the event of a world crisis. When the book was published, last summer, the story became a sort of urban legend, and Aldrich even managed an appearance on "This Week with David Brinkley," despite White House efforts to have it cancelled. The White House was helped when one of the unnamed sources for the Marriott Hotel story denounced it as mere rumor. But Regnery dismissed all criticism of the book, saying, "It's typical of the White House. They deny everything they don't like."

From the start, there were serious questions about the credibility of "Unlimited Access." And now Aldrich himself is having second thoughts about what he wrote, and he blames the publisher. "The Marriott thing was not quite solid," he told me earlier this month. "It was hypothetical." He said that he still believed that Clinton sneaked out for late-night sex, but he acknowledged that he had no proof of this, and was probably wrong about the Marriott Hotel.

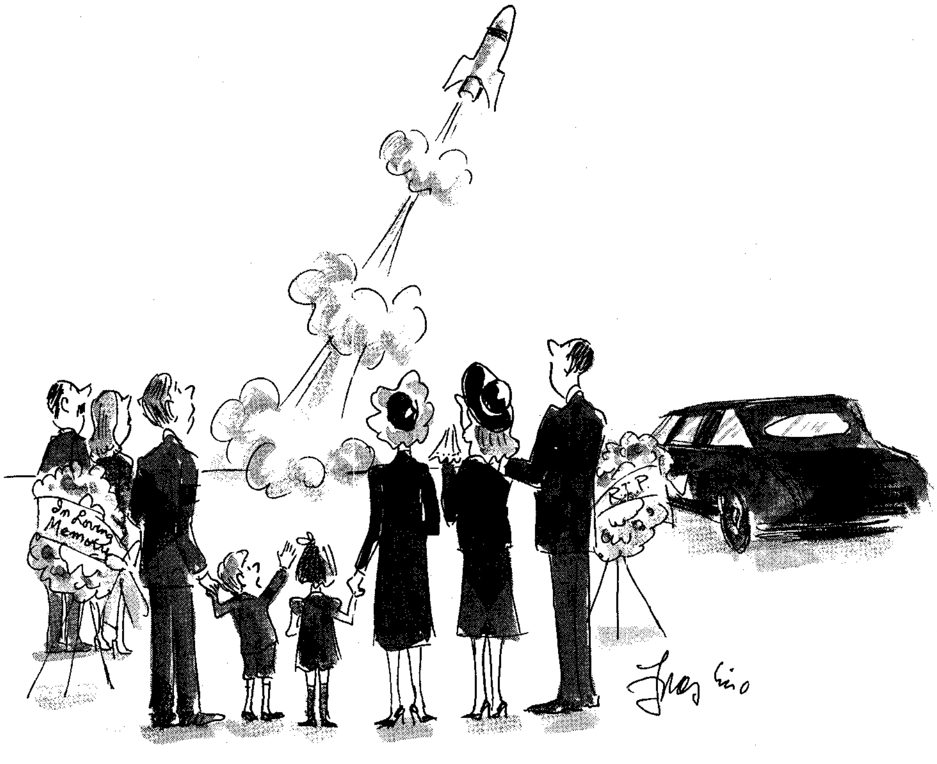
Aldrich said this from a telephone

booth in Texas, in the course of a still vigorous publicity tour for "Unlimited Access." In his original draft, Aldrich explained, "the Marriott stuff was in the back," appearing in an epilogue, part of what he called a "mock investigation" into the Clintons which was contrived to look the way their F.B.I. file might. Like many real raw F.B.I. files, this one, which Aldrich now calls hypothetical, contained unsubstantiated gossip. But, Aldrich said, Richard Vigilante, who was then the editor of Regnery, "got a hold of it, and made a huge deal out of it." The Regnery people forced him, he said, to take the allegation out of the epilogue and put it in the main text. "I didn't want to move it," he told me. "I felt it destroyed the balance of the book. They told me they were the experts. They told me they might not print the book otherwise. There was a big battle." Aldrich added, "I lost the argument."

Vigilante told me that there might have been a misunderstanding. He acknowledged having moved the Marriott story into the main body of the book after a long "confrontational" discussion with Aldrich. But he said that if Aldrich had been "trying to soft-pedal any of these stories," by putting them in the fake F.B.I. file, his editors never got the message. "It was a fast-paced time." Vigilante also conceded that no one at the publishing house, including the firm's lawyers, ever required proof from Aldrich, or even the names of his sources.

Such an apparent lapse might be treated as a firing offense at another publishing house. But Alfred Regnery saw it as an occasion for humor. Asked whether he still stood by the story, he said lightheartedly that "somebody who worked at the White House at a very high level told me that he did get it wrong—she said it was actually the Willard." The Willard is a hotel close to the Marriott.

To be sure, some Regnery books remain very much in the old tradition. A 1994 biography of Richard Nixon by Jonathan Aitken, a Conservative Member of the British Parliament, was treated respectfully by critics. The historian Michael R. Beschloss said that the book was "elegantly written, occasionally showing surprising detachment, sometimes overstraining the praise." Other titles, taking on major, nonpolitical subjects, can be credited with, at the very least, a daffy boldness. For example, Peter H. Duesberg's "Inventing the AIDS Virus" argues that H.I.V. is a harmless virus. Clearly, in an era of editorial conformity Regnery has given voice to outcasts whom more conventional houses won't deal with, and has sometimes done so to its profit. Mark Fuhrman, the former Los Angeles detective and convicted perjurer, was turned down by sixteen other publishers before Regnery agreed to publish "Murder in Brentwood." As it turned out, Fuhrman's defense of his role in the O. J. Simpson case became a No. 1 best-seller on the *Times* list—one of four *Times* best-sellers that the company can claim in just over two years. The others are the Aldrich exposé, Tyrrell's "Boy Clinton," and a book on gun-owning, by Wayne LaPierre, the executive vice-president of the National Rifle Association.



"Bye-bye, Grandma."

In some ways, it seems curious that Alfred Regnery has chosen to publish scandalous books about others' sexual foibles. For he has had his own share of family woes and public embarrassments.

One of four children of Henry Regnery, the company's founder, Alfred was reared on the family's estate, in Hinsdale, an affluent Chicago suburb. He was brought up in an environment that his longtime friend David Keene, the chairman of the American Conservative Union, told me was "weird not in the usual sense but in a time-warp sort of way." The family, surrounded by books and classical music, was dominated by Henry Regnery and his wife, a devout Quaker, who addressed others as "thee." William Buckley, an early visitor to the house, recalls that the atmosphere was so strictly Christian "we used to have to go across the street for cocktails." Nonetheless, he says, the household was always filled with "divine people." Alfred, for his part, recalls that his mother was particularly nervous about a visit from Prince Otto von Hapsburg. "It was by a lot of people's standards a sort of rarefied atmosphere," he acknowledges. "We talked about world affairs, politics, history, and literature. We didn't have a television." The Regnery children were also shielded from liberalism. "My father used to talk about left-wingers all the time. I remember having this image, I didn't know quite what to believe, but it was *really* bad," Regnery now says.

Henry Regnery, whose wealth derived from a family-owned textile mill, began his adulthood as a New Deal Democrat but traced an increasingly rightward path, as he reports in a good-humored autobiography, entitled "Memoirs of a Dissident Publisher" and published (by him) in 1985. When he founded the press, it was partly to give expression to his beliefs, which had become anti-Roosevelt and antiwar, and his first list, in 1948, included a book by one of Hitler's top generals, which was dismissed by the *Times* as "propaganda for a lost cause."

During the nineteen-fifties, the Regnery press, situated in Hinsdale, won influence beyond its size, thanks to such books as "God and Man at Yale" (which was attacked by Arthur Schlesinger as "totalitarian") and "McCarthy and His Enemies," written by Buckley and L. Brent Bozell, and published in 1952. Senator Joseph McCarthy was a friend of Regnery's, and the firm's defense of him further solidified its importance to the right. The Regnery authors railed against the evils of Communism, godlessness, Zionism, and the Democratic Party. In 1956, Harry S. Truman was targeted by a Regnery book entitled "The Truman Scandals," which, though less personal in tone than recent titles, demonstrated an early flair for exaggerating corruption in the enemy camp.

Presiding amiably over all this was Henry Regnery, a pugnacious enthusiast, who, as Buckley put it, "thought every book was the beginning of the World's Fair." Broad in his interests, he also published editions of Thomas Aquinas and a book of essays by John Dos Passos, who had turned increasingly toward the right. Regnery sometimes paid a price for his defense of unpopular ideas. In retribution for his publication of "God and Man at Yale," for instance, Mortimer Adler cancelled Regnery's contract to print the University of Chicago's Great Books series. But Henry Regnery kept the conservative faith, in style or out, seeing to it that such books as his friend Whittaker Chambers's "Witness" remained in print long after major publishers had lost interest.

Meanwhile, Henry Regnery, Jr., who family friends say resembled his father, was being groomed as the successor, while his older brother Alfred decided to pursue a legal career. Alfred received a bachelor's degree from Beloit College, in economics and German, and in 1968 he enrolled in the University of Wisconsin law school. Regnery told me recently that he wasn't politically involved at the time, but his law-school roommate, David Keene, has a different recollection. The two met, Keene says, while they were working on the Goldwater campaign, and both later served as leaders of Young Americans for Freedom. Because of the leftist drift of Madison, Wisconsin, during the late sixties, "we were sort of battling the left every day on campus."

After law school, Alfred Regnery joined a Madison law firm, and then, in 1976, ran as a law-and-order Republican candidate for District Attorney. In Democratic Madison, his was a lost cause from the start, but two days before the election his bid entered the realm of the bizarre: His wife, Christina, who was then eight and a half months pregnant with their fourth child, called the police to say that she had been forced at knifepoint to perform oral sex on two intruders, one white and one black. She claimed that the two men had been trying to intimidate her husband into dropping out of the race. The police found no signs of a break-in, but a police report filed at the time describes a strange scene. In the Regnerys' bedroom, the report said, police found a prophylactic stretched over a bottle of feminine-hygiene spray and sexually explicit books and photographs, one in German. The police quickly suspected that Mrs. Regnery had fabricated the charges, according to newspaper accounts. The police report concluded that her wounds, none of which were much deeper than scratches, were self-inflicted. Even after the election was over (to no one's surprise, Regnery lost), the local press, particularly the liberal *Capital Times*, covered every twist in the story, including charges by Regnery's opponent that Regnery had exploited the episode for political sympathy although he knew it to be baseless. "It was a most unfortunate circumstance," he now recalls with discomfort, adding that his wife "wasn't well" during that period. "I was very upset. I tried to handle it as best I could."

Keene, who was then working in Washington, says that he helped Regnery find a job on the staff of United States Senator Paul Laxalt, a Nevada Republican. In 1983, Regnery's private life became public again when he was appointed by Ronald Reagan to serve as head of the Office of Juvenile Justice. Critics attacked the appointment, calling Regnery unqualified and ideologically extreme. The *Capital Times*, known among conservatives as the "prai-

Some Things Are Still Sacred

Majesty. Seclusion. Refinement. In a world of compromise, we maintain what matters most. Experience the sanctuary of our award winning resort, blissfully afloat in the world's most breathtaking lagoon.

For more information or reservations call: 1-800-237-1236

A member of The Leading Hotels of the World

Bora Bora Lagoon Resort
French Polynesia

http://www.orient-expresshotels.com/

DALLAS PRIDGEN JEWELRY
One at a time, by hand
"Leap Frog" Bracelet, 12 links:
14K Gold $595, Sterling $165. Visa/MC/Amex
Unconditionally Guaranteed. 1-800-477-1856
PO Box 147, Chapel Hill NC 27514 (919) 933-5759

YOUR FAVORITE MAGAZINES
Best Prices
Organized System - EBSCO
Representing over 200,000 periodicals
Call today 1-888-880-MAGS

508·693·7711
MARTHA'S VINEYARD
VACATION RENTALS

ENGLAND IRELAND SCOTLAND WALES
- Rental accommodations.
- Enchantingly rustic to simply elegant.
- Cottages, manor houses, castles.
- London and Dublin flats.
- Weekly or monthly.

As You Like It 415/380-9848

rie *Pravda*," was again aggressive in its coverage.

Regnery was confirmed for the Justice post but resigned three years later, several weeks before another damaging news account—this time by Murray Waas, in *The New Republic*. Waas suggested that Regnery had mishandled his office by awarding large government grants to dubious recipients, among them a former songwriter for the children's television show "Captain Kangaroo," to whom he gave some eight hundred thousand dollars to investigate the cartoons in pornographic magazines. *The New Republic* story also re-reported the Madison rape saga, bringing it to a national audience for the first time.

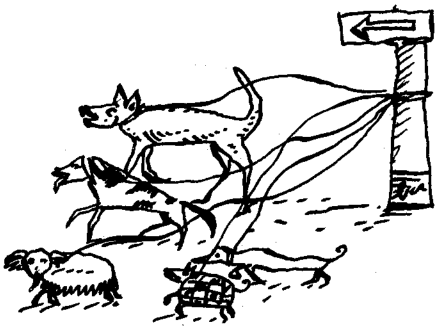
Regnery calls a lot of the press coverage he received from the mainstream media "unfair," but adds that it was long ago. "I've put it out of my mind," he told me. "I can't comment on it, because I can't remember it." When I asked Regnery whether the pain and humiliation he suffered then had made him more sensitive to the vulnerabilities of other public figures, he merely replied, "We're pretty careful about what we publish. The authors check facts."

In the early eighties, the Regnery press went through a volatile time. At one point, Henry, Sr., who had spent millions subsidizing the company, lost control of it to a more commercially minded son-in-law, Harvey Plotnick, who absorbed the company into his own imprint, Contemporary Books. According to a family friend and former Regnery editor, Jameson Campaigne, Plotnick scandalized the family by publishing exercise books. Plotnick eventually sold Contemporary Books, to the Tribune Company, and got a divorce from Regnery's daughter, Susan. Then, in 1983, Henry, Jr., was killed in a plane crash, leaving what was left of the Regnery list to his father. In 1986, Alfred took over the firm, restored the Regnery name, and moved it to Washington.

Almost at once, Alfred engaged his firm in a new kind of political warfare. Contemptuous of the mainstream press because of his own experiences, and certain that liberal New York publishers are "more biased than we are," Alfred took steps to settle the score. The editorial focus shifted from the conservative mind to the liberal jugular.

Characteristic of Alfred's more bloodthirsty approach was his first best-seller, a 1988 Kennedy exposé, "Senatorial Privilege: The Chappaquiddick Cover-Up," by the newspaperman Leo Damore. Regnery counts his publication of the book, which had originally been acquired by Random House but then cancelled, as an act of courage in the face of liberal pressure. But Peter Osnos, the former Random House editor who had handled the book, said that it was dropped for professional reasons, not political ones. In particular, Osnos said, Damore, who committed suicide in 1995, refused to provide substantiation for his charges, including tapes of his interviews. Osnos doesn't challenge the accuracy of the book so much as its tone. "That book showed Regnery how to take the low road," Osnos said.

Despite a few other healthy sellers, the company was faltering financially when in 1993 Alfred Regnery sold his majority share to Tom Phillips, a longtime friend and a mass marketer of the right. (Phillips Publishing International is the largest publisher of newsletters in the country.) In doing so, Regnery ceded the controlling interest to a political soul mate with a sharper sense of the bottom line. Phillips, the publisher of the gossip-ridden newsletter *Human Events* and the owner of the Conservative Book Club, provided Regnery's books with an in-house sales-and-publicity machine. It is not unusual to see the dirt dug up in *Human Events* recycled in Regnery books and marketed through the Conservative Book Club, creating an anti-Clinton echo chamber. There is a risk in such insularity. "Theirs is not an intellectual list," said Adam Bellow, the editorial director of the Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster that specializes in more thoughtful conservative books.

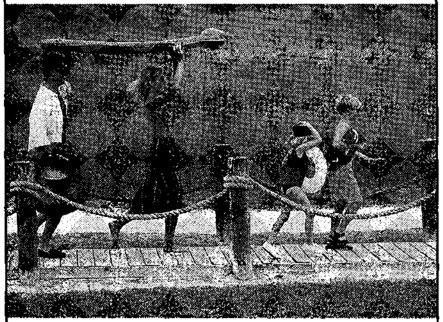


Some friends, like David Keene, believe that Phillips has pushed Regnery to publish more overtly commercial books than he might like. "Alf is torn," Keene says. "He wanted to do what his father did *and* make money." But if Regnery has qualms they're difficult to detect. Vigilante, the Regnery editor, justifies the aggressive nature of the company's political books as a conservative adoption of liberal tactics—a form of political retribution. "We're playing by Watergate rules," Vigilante said. "I do think, and I admit this is controversial, that Watergate established that when you're going after corruption in very high places it's legitimate to open up a story that you don't close"—in essence, to follow different rules. Vigilante defended Regnery's practice of not checking sources by saying, "I assume Ben Bradlee doesn't know who Deep Throat is." But Vigilante was seemingly unaware that in covering Watergate the Washington *Post* required two independent sources for every major allegation, and that a top editor know the names of every major source, including Bob Woodward's fabled Deep Throat. Regnery, in short, appears to be playing by Regnery rules.

Lucianne Goldberg, the literary agent, suggests that the Regnery press has moved from the conservative rearguard to the political vanguard by catering to the nation's preference for gossip rather than ideology. "Where it's at now is no longer conservative versus liberal," Goldberg said. "It's clean versus unclean. People want the scandal, the dish." And no one dishes quite like Regnery.

What Alfred Regnery's forebears would think of his formula for success is a matter of conjecture, but the press's list does seem something of a departure from the old-fashioned virtues taught in a Midwestern Quaker household. Buckley, for instance, believes that the old man would never have published "these books by cops—never! He was interested in culture." Indeed, there is a story in the family that when the first Henry Regnery decided to go into the publishing business his father warned him that if he ever started to make money he could be pretty sure he was "publishing the wrong kinds of books." At the Regnery press these days, sales have never been better. ♦

We will rescue you.



Escape to Sanibel Inn and we will rescue you. Sanibel Inn captures the essence of Sanibel Island's natural beauty. Our native southwestern Florida vegetation attracts many species of animals, including families who love learning about our environment. Make your vacation memorable at the Sanibel Inn, where nature meets the sea. For your **free** Vacation Planner or more information, call **1-800-698-9952**.

SANIBEL INN
WHERE NATURE MEETS THE SEA
A South Seas Resort
www.ssrc.com

Classic Polo Shirts
Probably the best of their type anywhere, they've quickly joined the ranks of our most sought-after Tilleys.
There are too many carefully thought out details to mention here, but be assured, you will appreciate the quality of the construction, fit, feel and appearance of these short & long-sleved polo shirts.
Tilley Endurables *Women are buying them too!*
VISIT OUR WEB SITE www.tilley.com 1-800-884-2698 300 LANGNER ROAD, WEST SENECA, NY

Vacation Rentals France, Italy, Spain & Portugal
We have a wonderful selection of personally inspected Country Homes, Villas and Apartments. Rentals available from a week to a year. Call Vacances Provençales Vacations, 1-800-263-7152, FAX (416)322-0706. www.inforamp.net/~vpv

THE NOA NOA CATALOGUE
Our original batik and handpainted clothing in motifs inspired by the South Seas. Cottons, linens & silks. Call 800-771-5610 or fax 808-329-2337 http://www.noanoa.com

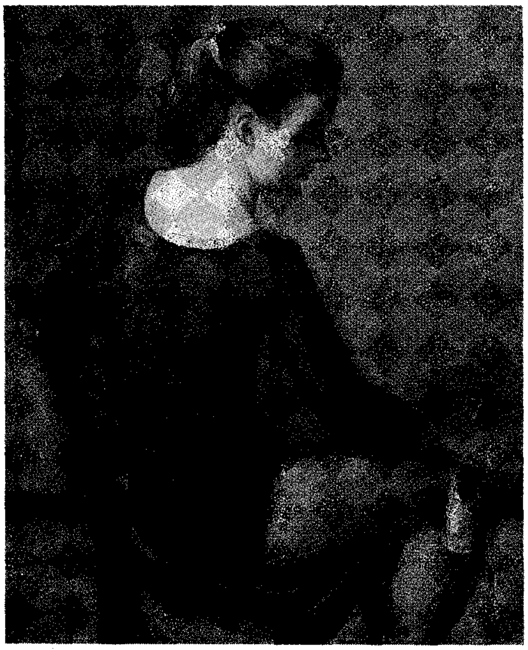
ANNALS OF APPEARANCES

TALES OF A BEAUTY

A woman's exceptional life.

BY ALISON ROSE

MY friend Francine—she's from Atlanta—is so unnervingly beautiful that ugliness of all sorts falls to pieces wherever she is. I've been watching her beauty for more than thirty years, and the truth is that it just wasn't normal to see a girl who looked like that. It was as if someone had made her up, out of a longing. The first time I ever saw Francine, in 1963, was in one of those dingy little white rooms in the Barbizon Hotel for Women, on Lexington Avenue. She was getting ready to go out on more than one date. She always had two or three dates planned for every evening. Men called and lined up and waited to get to see her whenever she could fit them into her nightlife. That evening, Francine was wearing a black crêpe just-below-the-knee sleeveless sheath, black sheer stockings, and black peau-de-soie high heels. Her blond hair was parted in the middle and pulled back into a chignon. She had the smallest waist imaginable and definite muscles in her upper arms and her calves. She had no hips whatsoever. Her head was large, and it was obvious that it would look good on a movie screen; her skin was like white peaches. She had a long, straight Grecian nose—no one had a profile like hers—and I remember thinking that her eyes, almost dark blue (they opened and closed slowly as she talked), looked like Montgomery Clift's. Conversation with her was a little out of synch, because she had a spirit that moved at its own pace. There wasn't any sarcasm or hostility in the air around her. On the floor, near the room's single twin bed, was an uneaten grilled-cheese-with-bacon sandwich, a half-empty glass of iced tea, a scattering of makeup, and a big hand mirror, which was lying face down on the carpet. In the middle of the room was a hanging rack jammed with black cocktail dresses—they rustled when she brushed against them—and other clothes.



A portrait of Francine as a dancer. She just accepted all of it as a birthright.

CONSTANTINE CHATOV

Francine said I could wear any of those dresses if I wanted to. She was so nice there wasn't anything else to do but let all the envious thoughts in my head go completely away, at least until she'd put on a little black coat and white gloves and left to go out on her dates.

Beauty is considered a great big deal. Whether it's lethal or a form of salvation is sometimes hard to know. Beauty can make ugliness recede until its residue is all washed away. It's a matter of focus. It is also true that beauty can cause a fair amount of confusion, destabilizing behavior, and various sorts of destruction. But in the company of human beauty a not-so-good-looking person can feel more good-looking than he or she is—a part of something larger than not feeling beautiful enough. Even better—and I'm

READER SERVICE VALUE PROGRAM

R.S.V.P.

AN INVITATION TO RESPOND DIRECTLY TO THE NEW YORKER'S ADVERTISERS

The Reader Service Value Program features New Yorker *advertisers who want to offer additional information. You are invited to respond directly by telephone (just look for the ✆ symbol) or by checking the corresponding number(s), and mailing the attached postage-paid card .*

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Travel to Bermuda with *The New Yorker*

Meet Lee Lorenz, Cartoon Editor of *The New Yorker* and author of "The Art of *The New Yorker* 1925-1995" at a private reception and special seminar for *New Yorker* readers at the Southampton Princess on Saturday August 16, 1997

Trip packages start at $899 per person. For information, call 1-888-218-8200.

1. **Israel.** The Holy Land of three great religions also doubles as one of the world's most extraordinary and delightful tourist destinations. Astonishing archeology. Crusader castles, Canaanite cities, Herodian palaces, Roman amphitheaters. Gorgeous scenery, four seas, lush countryside, wild deserts. Luxurious hotels and truly great restaurants. Breathtaking Jerusalem. Tel Aviv, the city that never sleeps. Israel…the miracle on the Mediterranean. Call toll-free 1-888-77-ISRAEL.

APPAREL & ACCESSORIES

2. **J. Mavec & Company, Ltd.** A treasure on Madison Avenue—antique jewelry with a fashionable twist. Featuring engagement rings and cuff links, insects and animals, and the innovative contemporary jewelry by Gabriella Kiss. 946 Madison Avenue, NYC. For more information call 1-212-517-7665.

3. **THE TERRITORY AHEAD.** Exceptional clothing for men and women. Original designs blend unique fabrics, rich colors and textures, with fine craftsmanship and attention to detail. 100% satisfaction guaranteed.

4. **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

AUTOMOTIVE

5. **AUDI A8.** Elegance without arrogance. Excellence without excess. Class without mass. For more information about the new Audi A8 please visit us at **http://www.audi.com**

6. **Hertz.** Discover the real Europe with Hertz Affordable Europe! For a copy of our '97 brochure with information on our flexible rental programs and quality service at over 2,500 locations across Europe, call 1-800-654-3001.

7. **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

✆ **Books on Tape, Inc.** More than 3,500 full-length best sellers on cassette. Twenty-five new titles monthly. Call for a free color brochure. 1-800-626-3333 or visit our web site at **http://www.booksontape.com**

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

8. **New York City Ballet.** For a season schedule or to enter the contest to win the *Pavane* poster shown in this issue, write to: New York City Ballet (attn: Marketing Dept.), NY State Theater, 20 Lincoln Center, NY, NY 10023. Our Spring Season runs through June 29th. For tickets call Ticketmaster at **212-307-4100** or visit the NY State Theater Box Office.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

9. **The Calvert Group** offers a family of mutual funds that invest in socially and environmentally responsible companies. For information call your financial professional or Calvert Group at **1-800-987-4860.**

10. **Northwestern Mutual Life.** Order a free consultation using Northwestern Mutual's proprietary "Business Planning Analysis." For a description, or more information, please visit **http://www.northwesternmutual.com/business/analysis**

11. **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

FURNISHINGS & ACCESSORIES

12. **Aschenbach Limited Editions.** Woodcuts by world-renowned sculptor Paul Aschenbach (1921-1994). Hand-pulled art prints on 22" x 17" handmade paper. Exceptional collector's value. Free catalog. Call **1-610-486-0404.**

✆ **Beverly Bremer Silver Shop.** Matching service—sterling silver, new and obsolete flatware and holloware in mint condition, all at less than half price. Call for inventory of your pattern. **1-800-270-4009** or **1-404-261-4009.**

✆ **Endless Pools™.** You swim in place against a gentle current adjustable to any speed or ability in a new concept exercise pool that is only 8' by 15'. Call **1-800-732-8660** or visit **http://www.endlesspools.com**

✆ **Kohler Bath & Kitchen Ideas.** A complete set of full-color product catalogs covering baths and whirlpools, showers, lavatories, toilets and bidets, kitchen and entertainment sinks, faucets and accessories. Call **1-800-4-KOHLER, ext. NP4.** Kohler Co. $8.00 for catalogs. Visit **http://www.kohlerco.com**

HEALTH CARE

13. **American College of Surgeons.** The American College of Surgeons offers free brochures about retaining your right of "Patient Choice" as well as important information concerning other surgical care. Visit **http://www.facs.org**

✆ **Cancer Treatment Centers of America™.** "A place that believes in treating the whole person, not just the cancer." To speak to an oncology information specialist or receive literature, please call **1-800-234-9082.**

✆ **Structure House.** The #1 residential program for weight control and lifestyle change. Beautiful surroundings, serious results. Over twenty years of long-term weight loss. Call **1-800-553-0052.**

ON-LINE SERVICES

E-NEWS. Look for *The New Yorker* at The Electronic Newsstand on the World Wide Web and browse what's new from our advertisers. **http://www.enews.com/magazines/new_yorker**

TRAVEL

AIRLINES

14. **LOT Polish Airlines.** Fly LOT Polish Airlines to the cobbled streets and vistas of Old Town, Warsaw. For information call **1-800-223-0593.**

✆ **Swissair.** Learn more about Swissair and Switzerland's exciting and affordable vacation possibilities in our *Switzerland Vacation Planner.* For a free copy call **1-800-GO-SWISS, ext. 25.**

15. **United Airlines.** Fly United Airlines to London and experience a wonderful travel vacation package from United Vacations. Call **1-800-328-6877.**

16. **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

CRUISES

17. **Celebrity Cruises.** Exceeding expectations with cruises to the Caribbean, Alaska, Bermuda, and trans-canal. For more information call your travel counselor or **1-800-CELEBRITY, ext. 426.**

18. **KD River Cruises of Europe.** Only KD offers more than 400 cruise itineraries on Europe's great rivers: the legendary Rhine, the historic Elbe, the blue Danube, and the romantic Seine and Rhone rivers. Send for your free brochure today.

19. **Peter Deilmann EuropAmerica Cruises.** Enchanting experiences and breathtaking beauty await you on a 7-14 day luxury cruise along Europe's most majestic rivers. Pre- and post- cruise stays. Call **1-800-348-8287** for a free brochure.

20. **Royal Olympic Cruises.** Sail the Greek Islands on our friendly, intimate ships. For more information and a free brochure, call **1-800-467-7740.**

21. **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

HOTELS & ACCOMMODATIONS

22. **Doral Golf Resort & Spa.** Challenge the restored Blue Monster Golf Course and find rejuvenation at the world-renowned Spa at Doral. Golf, tennis, spa packages from $215. **1-800-71-DORAL.**

✆ **Keltic Lodge.** A majestic location on Nova Scotia's world-famous Cabot trail. Call **1-800-565-0444.**

✆ **Kiawah Island by Pam Harrington Exclusives.** Thirty minutes from historic Charleston. Select 1- to 10-bedroom accommodations. Golf, tennis, hiking, children's programs, and much more. For information please call **1-800-845-6966.**

23. **Lana'i, Hawaii** offers 2 lavish resorts–the Lodge at Koele nestled in the upcountry, and the Manele Bay Hotel overlooking Hulope'e Bay. For more information please call **1-800-321-4666.**

24. **Millennium Broadway.** A unique New York hotel in the heart of Broadway, near corporate offices, entertainment and shopping. World-class business and guest services. Conference center. Restaurant Charlotte. Call **1-800-622-5569.**

25. **Millennium Hotels & Resorts.** 5-Star deluxe centrally located hotels with special savings this summer. From 120-159 pounds sterling including VAT and full English breakfast. Call **1-800-465-6486.**

26. **Sanibel Inn** on Sanibel Island, where butterflies and hummingbirds come to feed in the preserved native island surroundings. For your FREE Vacation Planner call **1-800-698-9952.**

✆ **Scottsdale Princess.** The soul of Arizona. The heart of your vacation. Award-winning cuisine, spacious accommodations, and more. Call **1-800-223-1818.**

27. **Southampton Princess.** Bermuda's most luxurious resort introduces Dolphin Quest, a very special dolphin-human encounter program for the delight and education of guests. Call **1-800-223-1818.**

28. **Swissotel, The Drake.** Last year we rescued thousands of travelers from staying at ordinary hotels. New Park Avenue Spa & Fitness. Call **1-800-63 SWISS.**

29. **The Virginian.** A private community in the foothills of Southwest Virginia with a Tom Fazio 18-hole championship golf course and lovely homesites.

30. **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

TOURISM BOARDS

✆ **Alpine Tourist Commission.** The Alps are a majestically mountainous year-round playground. Climb, ski, walk, or just look! The Alps truly are the Greatest Outdoors. Call **1-800-262-ALPS.**

31. **Barbados Tourism Authority.** A vacation beyond your imagination. Bask on pink and white sand. Golf on tropical greens. Sail turquoise waters alongside silver flying fish. Uncrowded and unspoiled. Call **1-888-BARBADOS.**

32. **British Tourist Authority.** Unexpected Britain is vibrant, stylish, and fun–there's still history and pageantry–come visit! Call **1-800-357-2748** for your free vacation planner.

33. **Caribbean Coalition for Tourism.** The Ultimate CARIBBEAN VACATION PLANNER…with over 300 sun-soaked pages to help you plan your dream vacation in paradise. For a free copy call **1-800-356-9999, ext. 436** and start living your dream today.

34. **Club France.** Travel in style with unique benefits, upgrades, discounts, frequent flyer miles, toll-free numbers and much more. (Annual dues $65.) For information, call **1-800-881-5060 ext 475** or e-mail Club France at **FGTOUSA.org**

IF UNABLE TO REACH TELEPHONE LISTINGS, SEND REQUESTS WITH ISSUE DATE NOTED, TO **THE NEW YORKER READER SERVICES**, 20 WEST 43RD ST., NEW YORK, NY 10036. IF RESPONSE CARD IS MISSING, SEND YOUR REQUESTS WITH ISSUE DATE NOTED, TO **THE NEW YORKER**, P.O. BOX 5347, PITTSFIELD, MA 01203-9892. OFFER VALID UNTIL AUGUST 18, 1997.

970526

ADVERTISEMENT

35. French Government Tourist Office. Plan your trip to France with the French Adventure Kit including 1997 Discovery Guide, Mastercard destinations information and Air France holiday catalog. Call 1-888-665-4373.

✆ Glasgow, Scotland. Send for free brochures: Glasgow's guide to Greater Glasgow, the Scottish Tourist Board's vacation planner and the British Tourist Authority's Britain guide. For more information please call 1-800-395-7268.

✆ Greek National Tourist Organization. Greece is one of the oldest civilizations on earth and the cradle of democracy. Come and discover over 3,000 sun-drenched isles and their gorgeous beaches. For information please call 1-212-421-5777.

1. Israel Ministry of Tourism. This extraordinary destination has it all. History, culture, great food, shopping, beaches, and more. No one belongs here more than you. Please call toll-free 1-888-77-ISRAEL.

36. Louisiana. Looking for something different? Come dance, eat, plantation hop and get back to nature in Louisiana. For your free tour guide, call 1-800-964-7018. Louisiana. Come as you are. Leave different.

✆ Maine. The way life should be. From the mountains to the sea, Maine is a spectacular setting for the perfect vacation. For a guide, write Maine Tourism, SHS 59, NY-47, Augusta, Maine, 04333. Call 1-800-782-6468 or visit http://www.visitmaine.com

37. Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau. From beautiful beaches to bistros and boutiques, we've got all the reasons you need to come visit. Call 1-800-4-MIAMI-FL for your free 150-page visitor's guide, and get packing.

38. Monaco Government Tourist Office. Visit the enchanting land of Monaco in 1997 as the Principality celebrates 700 years of unbroken Grimaldi rule. Experience the rich culture and hospitality of a land where Princes still reign and dreams come true. Call 1-800-753-9696.

39. Nevada Commission on Tourism. Discover Nevada, home of world-class gaming excitement. Celebrity entertainment. Spectacular events. And scenic, cultural and historic wonders. For your free visitor's guide, call 1-800-NEVADA-8.

40. New Mexico...Enchantment USA: 1-800-733-6396, ext. 7094. Explore the treasures of an enchanting land—ancient cultures, glorious sunsets, visions of majestic mountains and lush forests. Come see New Mexico...Enchantment USA. For FREE Travel Guides call 1-800-See New Mex. http://www.newmexico.org

41. PLANNING YOUR TRIP TO EUROPE. Authoritative 68-page, full-color guide to 26 countries presented by the European Travel Commission. Covers important attractions, events, entertainment, transportation, food and drink. With maps and photos. FREE. Call 1-800-862-6747.

✆ The Polish National Tourist Office provides extensive information about Poland. For more information please call 1-212-338-9412 or e-mail us at pntonyc@polandtour.org

✆ Puerto Rico Tourism. Call 1-800-245-3434 now to reserve your place at the Puerto Rico Heineken Jazzfest. May 29 through June 1, 1997.

42. The Tourist Office of Spain. Spain inspires passion, be it for Gaudi, tapas, flamenco, Goya, or golf. Experience the passion and joy yourself. Call 1-888-OK-SPAIN for a free full-color Spain Travel Planner.

43. United States Virgin Islands. Enjoy beautiful beaches, crystal-clear waters, duty-free shopping, exciting underwater adventures and nature at its best in one of the world's most romantic settings. For more information please call 1-800-372-USVI.

44. Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.

TOURS

✆ Norvista. Specializing in travel to Russia, Scandinavia and the Baltics. For a free brochure call 1-800-526-4927.

✆ Orient Flexi-Pax Tours. Travel with the specialists to Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Tahiti. Join one of our deluxe customized programs, tailored just for you. Call 1-800-545-5540, ext. 249.

✆ Rail Europe. Choose Eurostar, the Channel Tunnel Train, linking London to Paris or Brussels, or our popular 5-country railpass Europass. Add a car for maximum flexibility. Call 1-800-4EURAIL.

45. United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA). The smart traveler's planning kit...invaluable information about USTOA members, its $1 million consumer protection plan, and how to select a tour or vacation package. For a free copy call 1-800-GO-USTOA.

© 1997 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

not sure how she did it—Francine's beauty made me feel protected, calm.

FRANCINE came from a dynasty of beauties. Her mother, Frances, was the oldest of five sisters—the others were Corinne, Maybelle, Evelyn, and Marvine—from the hills of Tennessee. They were so outrageously gorgeous (many years ago, I saw a group photograph) that they looked different from what ordinarily passes as female in the human race; every one of them had made men's heads swirl and go out of control. They all had variations of the same face Francine has, and thick blond hair, except for Evelyn, who had red hair—"like Rita Hayworth's," Francine always said. When they were teen-agers, the sisters had fights about which one was the prettiest, and Evelyn always won. They were all tall, too—five feet eight or nine—and had long legs. Frances had the thickest natural platinum-blond hair—"like Lana Turner's," Francine said. A governor of Georgia once referred to Francine and her mother as "the Eighth Wonder of the World." I met Francine's mother, in the Regency Hotel on Park Avenue, when she was in her early forties, and she was shockingly, glamorously beautiful. She was cold, though. Francine told me that her mother looked in her bedroom mirror—it was ten feet tall and six feet wide—all the time; after her mother died, eight years ago, Francine put that mirror down in her basement.

During the Depression, Francine's mother and aunts nearly starved to death. Their father was a bootlegger, and was out of the picture. The sisters all slept in one big bed together, and they had to brush their teeth with twigs, because there weren't any toothbrushes, and Frances had to clean toilets at the high school and work in a dime store to bring home money for their mother. All that time, none of them were too upset, Francine told me, because they knew their beauty would get them out of the hills of Tennessee, and it did. Maybelle met an admiral in the Navy, out West; Francine's mother married her high-school sweetheart and moved to Atlanta, where she divorced and remarried; the other sisters all moved to San Francisco and got married and divorced and remarried and divorced, drifting back and forth between San Francisco and New York. Frances ended up rich from an interior-decorating business she had started on her own after she remarried. She was so beautiful that nobody could believe her décors wouldn't be. When Evelyn moved to New York the first time, Walter Winchell said, "The most beautiful woman in the world has come to New York."

At seven years old, Francine flew from Atlanta to New York by herself. She was an only child and had been living with a grandparent. When she arrived, her mother and all of her aunts were standing by the gate, each holding a Madame Alexander doll. Francine's mother kept Francine in strict beauty training all her life. The training was severe—an imprisonment, almost. It was an indoctrination of a kind that beautiful young women no longer have to undergo, in these postfeminist times. It was, Francine says, like being the little doll twirling uncontrollably when you open a jewelry box—all dressed up, like the icon of some fanatical religion. Her mother didn't talk to her about anything else.

"Nothing is more important than how you look and how you dress," Francine's mother repeated to her over and over again. She also said, "Use your wares. Show off your looks. Never go out without being fully dressed or without makeup." When Francine was about two and a half, she and her mother lived for a time in a hotel room in St. Louis. There was nothing to play with, so Francine made a slide out of the ironing board while her mother made cocktail dresses for herself out of black or brown silk taffeta. When Johnny Ray came on the radio singing that song about crying, Francine would dance to it. Frances would lay the fabric on the floor, cut it out, and, with a sewing machine she had bought, make beautiful cocktail dresses, with big, full skirts. She had an eighteen-inch waist.

Francine's mother had more rules for beauty: Never let a drop of sun fall on your skin, or one drop of water on your face (washing your face washes your skin away); never dye your hair; use an eyelash curler only when you're older. She had Francine wearing a girdle and a waist cincher when she was a teen-ager, even though she was very thin. A thought that Francine's mother had on mental troubles went this way: "You'd have to be out of your mind to give a psychiatrist money when you could go out and buy a new pair of shoes."

Always keep a lightweight scarf in

your handbag. When Francine's mother was in a fitting room in a department store trying on clothes, she would drape the scarf over her head and face, take the two back points, pull them forward, and tie them under her chin so she wouldn't ruin her lipstick or her hair. Saleswomen were astonished to find her in the fitting room with her head covered up.

Frances was so fair that her eyelashes were white. She told Francine that when she was pregnant she had rubbed her stomach and prayed out loud, "Please let her have black eyelashes. Please let her have black eyelashes." Francine's eyelashes turned out to be dark brown, and for as long as I've known Francine it has taken her forty-five minutes to put on layers of black mascara. I've timed it.

When she was thirty, Francine fractured her nose (I've never noticed a flaw in her profile) and her mother said to the plastic surgeon, "It's better to leave it the way it is than to have a nose job, but she's ruined—*it's just the end of her.*" Francine's mother had always thought that Francine was not entirely up to code. A favorite expression was "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," and another was "A man will walk a million miles for a good woman." Francine explained to me, "She meant not sleeping with anyone. You *had* to be a lady."

Aside from striving to obey the rules of beauty, Francine had no identity whatsoever. "Thank God I didn't raise my children that way," she says now. "I was the most charming little girl in the whole world," she adds, a bit ruefully. "I had perfect manners, I dressed perfectly. Mother said it would get me a rich husband, but I didn't want one." The swarms of men around Francine made her feel, oddly, isolated. Though it was amusing to have them around, their obsequiousness toward her made them seem idiotic, so there were times when all Francine wanted to do was be separate from them. She didn't think there was anything wrong with a woman wanting to be alone, and it seems true that a lot of beauties are out there alone.

She may not have learned it at home, but Francine has always had an inner beauty—I'm afraid that's the only thing to call it—which made her actual beauty about a million times as forceful and divine as maybe it even was. Nobody else has it and nobody else can get it—her particular brand. Men certainly thought that this was so, and they acted as though being around her for a while could free them of being too shallow, too ugly, too stupid, too rich, not rich enough, too high-minded, too preoccupied with business or television or revenge or sexual fixation, or whatever they hated about themselves. Being close to her was like getting a blessing from a priest.

Though of course it was impossible for her to live a normal life with people staring at her all the time, Francine had a lot of fun being a beauty. While she lived in New York, she went to countless formal balls and was always out dancing at, as I remember it, Le Club and El Morocco (*the* night spots in New York at the time); the Maisonette, where Peter Duchin sometimes thought she was Tuesday Weld; L'Interdit, where a man turned her around and forced her face to the light just so that he could see her eyes. She used to come back to the Barbizon to change clothes for the night's second or third date. She thought all that was fun. The man at L'Interdit had shocked her, but she lived in a world where she was rare, and she liked it. Whatever seemed pleasing to her was right there when she wanted it, and she says now, laughing, "I didn't have to look back and I didn't have to look forward. I loved being the center of attention on any dance floor, and everything else about life. That's why I stayed up all night." Francine's voice, with her lolling Southern accent, is soothing, as if nothing could ever go terribly wrong. Over the years, no matter where we've been living, I've never been without the comfort of that voice over the telephone. Nowadays, when we talk, I can't think of anyone she had a little crush on back then who didn't have a greater one on her. Even at the time, it wasn't like any other girl's life I'd ever heard of.

When Francine was eighteen, her mother bought her a lot of clothes and sent her to finishing school at La Châtelainie, in Gstaad. She had been in the Atlanta Ballet Company for five years, dancing every day, but ballet wasn't taught at La Châtelainie, and no student had ever had permission to leave the school to take classes elsewhere. One afternoon, when the owner of the school, Albert-Henri Jobin, was sitting outside the main chalet by himself, Francine almost crawled, she said, into Monsieur's lap and told him she couldn't live without ballet. M. Jobin knew she was telling the truth, and he found a ballet mistress who taught in a ballroom in Montreux and had danced with Pavlova's company, and every week Francine took an hour-and-a-half train ride through the mountains to Montreux.

One day around Christmastime, while about sixty girls were being served lunch from silver trays, M. Jobin opened the door to the dining hall, surveyed the room, looked directly at Francine, and said, "*Au revoir, mes enfants.*" Later that evening, he shot himself.

Francine spent summers with her mother or Aunt Marvine—in Paris, Rome, Bogotá, Aruba, Curaçao—and wherever she went men paid attention to her. Part of that old-time culture of beauty was getting to meet famous men (it's part of today's, for that matter), and some of the men Francine met went into a dither over her, or at least refrained from throwing her out on the street. Alfred Hitchcock was staying at the Atlanta Cabana Motor Hotel, just before "Marnie" opened, in 1964. Francine's mother sent him two dozen yellow roses and called to make an appointment for Francine to meet him. She thought he might want to put her in the movies. Francine was twenty, and people had been stopping her on the street to tell her how beautiful she was. (I was with her once in New York when that happened, outside Bloomingdale's.) When Francine arrived at Hitchcock's hotel room, it turned out that he had thought he was going to be interviewed by a journalist, and Francine had to explain: "No. My mother wanted me to meet you." He was very kind, sat in a big chair and talked to her for hours. "He did all the talking," Francine said. He was "very polite, apologetic" when he said to her, "I just spent a million dollars on Tippi Hedren and I can't do that again right now."

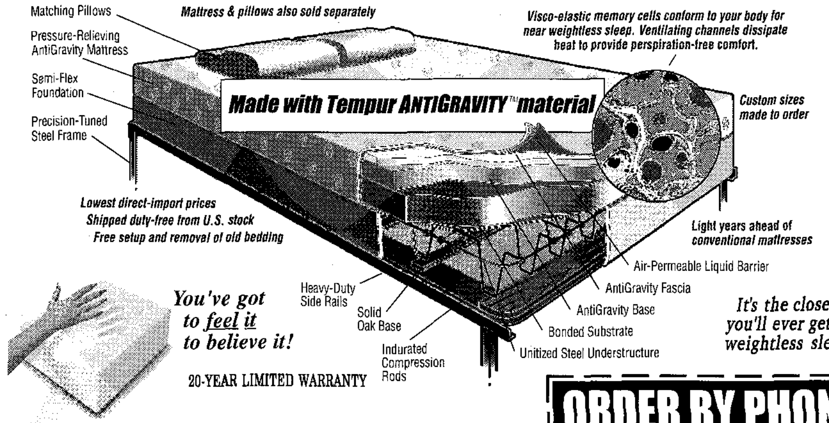
At Christmas in 1964, Francine flew from New York to Las Vegas to see her mother and her Aunt Marvine, who was living there. She was waving goodbye out the window to a boyfriend and so didn't see Eddie Fisher sit down in the seat next to her. Fisher was there with his manager—they were the only three people in first class. When Fisher said "What are you doing?" Francine said, "I'm waving goodbye to my boyfriend and I'm going to Las Vegas to meet another one." She was wearing a brown seal coat with a mink collar, and Fisher said, "You should always wear fur." On the trip, he kept singing "Oh! My Pa-Pa" to her while she was trying to sleep.

"When Eddie Fisher and I got off the plane, Mother was there with Aunt Marvine trailing behind her," Francine said. "They looked so much alike. They were always *dressed*, always, and there was a big to-do over Mother wherever she went. If you got more than one of them together, there was a bigger to-do. Eddie Fisher saw Mother in the distance, and he said, 'Oh! There's your mother. She's so beautiful.' We had to go to his show every night. He had us sitting right in the front. He'd dedicate a song to me and my mother, and we'd have to stand up." She laughed. "I just hate Las Vegas."

When Francine was living in Hollywood, in the late sixties and early seventies, she had a one-bedroom apartment in a Spanish-style building on Orange Grove. It was the kind of apartment we all came over to. Some of the many men milling around her there were dependent on her kindness. Even though Francine weighed about ninety pounds then and wore those Jean Harlow cut-on-the-bias dresses and was ten years younger than they were, they thought of her as some kind of mother, and she was. Edward G. Robinson, Jr., lived right next door. "He always wore his blue terry-cloth bathrobe when he came by," Francine said. "He had on black socks, usually. I don't think I ever saw him dressed. He would sit on my long blue-flowered sofa in that robe with his arms spread on the back of the sofa as if he were holding court. He looked just like his father, but he was taller. He'd recite lines from his father's movies verbatim. People said he always carried a gun, the way his father did in the movies. Everyone was afraid of him. He would have shot anyone else, but he loved me." John Drew Barrymore was there all the time, too. "We had tea in my teacups," Francine said. "They were blue and gold with little orange fish on them. He knew all about teacups. Every time he walked in, he looked as if he'd been living in the desert for the past ten years." Of course Francine did not sleep with these men—not after all her mother's impeccable tutelage—and anyway they were content just to be in her aura. She cooked for them. She made

83% BETTER SLEEP GUARANTEED

With the Life-Changing Tempur-Pedic Mattress


Matching Pillows
Mattress & pillows also sold separately
Visco-elastic memory cells conform to your body for near weightless sleep. Ventilating channels dissipate heat to provide perspiration-free comfort.
Pressure-Relieving AntiGravity Mattress
Semi-Flex Foundation
Made with Tempur ANTIGRAVITY™ material
Custom sizes made to order
Precision-Tuned Steel Frame
Lowest direct-import prices
Shipped duty-free from U.S. stock
Free setup and removal of old bedding
Light years ahead of conventional mattresses
Air-Permeable Liquid Barrier
AntiGravity Fascia
AntiGravity Base
Bonded Substrate
Unitized Steel Understructure
Heavy-Duty Side Rails
Solid Oak Base
Indurated Compression Rods
You've got to feel it to believe it!
20-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY
It's the closest you'll ever get to weightless sleep.

Sleep lab tests *prove* that the incredible ANTIGRAVITY material in our Swedish Mattress cuts nighttime tossing and turning by an astounding 83%! Compared to *other* premium mattresses, Tempur-Pedic is *5 times less likely* to cause sleep-disrupting body movements.

Do you suffer back, neck, hip, or shoulder pain? Fibrositis, sciatica, aching joints? Or pressure-induced circulatory problems? If so, wonderful relief may soon be yours!

THE REWARDS OF BUYING A TEMPUR-PEDIC

Tempur-Pedic *stabilizes* your musculoskeletal system in a cool, pressure-free "body mold." It gives you an uncanny feeling of weightlessness. In fact, it's the first *really new* sleep concept in 70 years.

WHY SETTLE FOR LESS?

Over 15,000 doctors and sleep clinics recommend Tempur-Pedic. The media give us *rave* reviews. Our sales have zoomed 6,590% in just 4 years! Duty-free *direct import* pricing makes our Swedish Mattress very affordable. We offer extended credit or 6-months-same-as-cash terms. And we handle everything *for* you—right over the phone.

TRY IT FOR 3 MONTHS—ON US!

We ship "on approval" for 3 full months' home trial. You get fast delivery, free setup, removal of old bedding. If you're not happy, we pick up the mattress—at our expense—and *BUY IT BACK* at your purchase price (less original shipping). You also get an extended 20-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY.

ORDER NOW—WITHOUT RISK!

Call 800.950.5579 or return coupon. If you're not ready to order, we'll send a sample of ANTIGRAVITY material, free video, direct import price list, and full details about the amazing Tempur-Pedic Mattress.

ORDER BY PHONE
800.950.5579

Tempur-Pedic, Inc.
848G Nandino Blvd.
Lexington, KY 40511

PLEASE PRINT PLAINLY

YES, your Tempur-Pedic Swedish Mattress is just what I've been looking for, so please:

☐ **Send mattress "on approval"** so I can try it in my own home—with *no obligation* to keep it—for 3 Full Months. Call me (at phone number below) to arrange delivery and risk-free tryout.

☐ **Send FREE SAMPLE KIT,** containing lab specimen of AntiGravity material, fascinating video, direct import price list, and complete product information.

Name________________
Phone________________
Address________________
City________________
State________Zip________

TEMPUR-PEDIC®
PRESSURE RELIEVING
SWEDISH MATTRESS AND PILLOW

© Copyright 1997 by Tempur-Pedic, Inc. All Rights Reserved

World's Largest Inventory

- China
- Crystal
- Flatware
- Collectibles

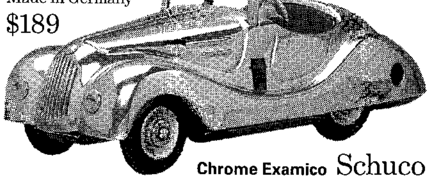
Discontinued & Active.
3,500,000 Pieces!
Over 65,000 Patterns!

REPLACEMENTS, LTD.

1-800-REPLACE (1-800-737-5223)
1089 Knox Road, PO Box 26029, Greensboro, NC 27420 • Dept. YO

Limited Edition Toys!™

Made in Germany
$189



Chrome Examico Schuco

All tin, wind-up! 5.75" long Edition: 1500 Available: 87 w/box
LILLIPUT 321 So. Main, Yerington NV 89447 **800-TIN-TOYS**

BORROW OUR BOOKS

Private Manhattan Library seeks new members to share 150,000+ volumes ranging from latest bestsellers to old treasures. Collection updated constantly. Strong in fiction, biography, mysteries, history, politics, 19th and 20th century literature, travel. Reader requests and reserves welcome. Modest annual fee. Tranquil atmosphere. Minimal automation.

GENERAL SOCIETY LIBRARY 20 W. 44th Street 212 921-1767

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK
At A Price You Can Afford!

$1.49 EACH Size: 5½"x 8½", 96 pgs, 1000 copies, 2-color cvr. All sizes & page counts.

Hard & Soft Cover. Free Price List.

800-277-8960 PROFESSIONAL PRESS
P.O. Box 3581 • Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3581

bacon-and-spinach salads specially for Eddie, Jr. The man she really liked, though, was an actor who lived downstairs. He gave her his brown suède jacket, and when she got married she had me keep it, and I had it in my closet for years.

When Elvis Presley performed at the Paramount Theatre in Atlanta, in 1956, Francine didn't go to see him. She hated his dyed black hair and thought he looked "redneck country tacky"—like a hood. "Mother would never have let me go out with a boy like that," she said.

But in Hollywood, a dozen years later, Francine and a ballerina friend were having dinner in a restaurant when one of Elvis's bodyguards invited the friend—he thought she looked like Priscilla Presley—to go visit Elvis in Palm Springs. The friend was scared, so Francine went along as a chaperon.

The weekend included a tour of Elvis's closet, which, Francine said, was "like a holy place, about fifteen feet long, with all his white jackets—twenty-five or thirty of them—perfectly spaced on perfect hangers. He was so proud of it." The one time Elvis, the friend, and Francine went out of the house, along with five bodyguards, was to buy Francine's friend a dress at I. Magnin. They drove in three Cadillacs, "like a funeral procession." Francine was fixing her hair in the back seat of the middle Cadillac, which Elvis was driving, and, she says, "I parted my hair, made a wave on the right side, and put on lip gloss—I was watching him watching me."

Back at the house, Elvis and the girls got dressed up. Elvis put on one of his white jackets from the closet, and white trousers. Then they all sat on the long sofa with the bodyguards until one of the bodyguards got up and put on a few of Elvis's records. The friend danced with Elvis. Francine didn't really want to dance with him, but he talked her into it by saying, "You have to. One day you can tell your grandchildren that you danced with me to 'Blue Suede Shoes.' " They jitterbugged to "Blue Suede Shoes" two or three times.

When Francine and her friend were packing to leave, the head bodyguard asked Francine for her telephone number. Elvis called her a few times, but she never did see him again. "There just wasn't anything that appealed to me about him whatsoever," she said. "And he was so sad. I never thought much about him after that." She added, though, "His spirit was just like mine, only different." Francine never thinks that anything she's done was a mistake. This is a kind of grace that a beauty can have: no regrets, since there's always someone else waiting for her; a belief in her own inevitability.

The story that Francine was really proud of was about the time that Charlie Chaplin watched her perform a ballet solo in the ballroom of the Palace Hotel, in Montreux, when she was eighteen. There was a grand piano and a pianist on the stage. Francine wore a black tutu and black satin toe shoes, and she danced on pointe to "Sleeping Beauty." After the solo, at a little reception, Chaplin came up to her and, though his daughter had also performed, said, "You were the best ballet dancer here today."

FRANCINE received fourteen proposals, many from heirs. (Other heirs she didn't give time to propose.)

HEIRS WHO PROPOSED:
An emerald-mine-fortune heir in Bogotá
A title in Ankara, Turkey
A marquis in France
A newspaper-empire heir in Paris
A pharmaceuticals heir
An heir to grocery stores in the South
A Dunlap-tires heir
A Texas oil heir

HEIRS WHO PURSUED HER BUT DIDN'T PROPOSE:
A canned-foods heir
An Italian newspaper heir
A supermarket heir
A banking heir
A DuPont
Prince Friedrich of Prussia

OTHER PROPOSALS:
A very rich Dutchman in Aruba
A young German Marxist whose father had been a Nazi officer
An orthodontist
A Boston Brahmin
The son of a television-series star
A stockbroker

EVEN though, when we were in our twenties, Francine always said that she never wanted to get married, she accepted four of these proposals. Her first husband, the son of the television-series star, was soft-spoken and very good-looking: he was tall, with beautiful shoulders and "a cloud above his head," Francine used to say, meaning it in the halo sense. They'd met in Los Angeles, and they had a daughter, Francesca, who looks to be from the dynasty of beauties, but more Nordic. (Her eyelashes are *very* white.) The second husband was the Texas oil millionaire, whom Francine met in a restaurant next to the Chelsea Hotel, in New York. After they had lived in Dallas for a while, he took Francine and Francesca to live on several hundred acres of land in a place called Oatmeal, Texas, where he shot tarantulas with a .22 from the front-porch steps, and where there were also four-foot-long rattlesnakes around to shoot. Francine talks about this wildlife as if she were making a grocery list; she has never been afraid of anything. She and the oilman were married seven years. They had a daughter, Zoe, who has red hair like her Great-Aunt Evelyn's and eyes like Francine's. Francine's third husband was an orthodontist in Atlanta. She had known him six months when he came to the back door of Francine's mother's house (she and the girls were living there after leaving Texas) with an enormous diamond ring, and proposed. They were married for six months. The fourth husband—he didn't last long, either—is simply not worth going into.

THE whole time I've known Francine, she has never bragged about her beauty in any way; she never mentioned the names of people who had paid her special attention unless I knew them, too. Until last Christmas, when I started to ask her questions about what it was like to be beautiful, I never knew that she'd met Elvis Presley or gone out with Prince Friedrich of Prussia, that she'd spent an afternoon talking to Alfred Hitchcock, or that all those heirs had wanted to marry her, or that Charlie Chaplin had admired her ballet solo in Montreux. She'd just accepted all of it as a birthright (her daughter Francesca says, "Grandmommy was the same way. I thought that was the norm"), and it was only because I'd asked that she

"You eat dog—excellent!"

• •

told me all the stories and all the names; it had seemed important to *me*.

Francine's daughters are grown now, and she lives by herself in an apartment in Atlanta that's like a reasonably big house. Down a flight of stairs, there's a basement where she does a lot of laundry. She likes domestic order, which is "like fixing everything," she says. One evening, she might go through boxes of the children's Madame Alexander dolls, laundering and straightening their costumes, and then sealing the boxes back up. Sometimes she talks to me on the portable phone while she does these things. The call-waiting sound comes on from time to time, and it's always some man asking her out to dinner or the movies, but she usually doesn't want to go. Despite being surrounded by so many men, and even having married four of them, Francine doesn't live for men. "I never mentally connected to anyone," she said in December. "I didn't need to." She has a self-sufficiency that most women would find scary. After a certain point, she doesn't like the isolation—it's a little bit boring—but she's not oppressed by it. "I'd rather be in a big mansion with a lot of servants and a big family," she said, but then added, "I was always a loner. I still am." Other women have always treated her like a freak: "It was hard for me to have friends." In college, girls didn't want to be her roommate because she was too beautiful, and after she came back from Texas she'd stand around alone at parties in Atlanta because the wives didn't like her. Very few women ever call. She said, "When I went to church, years ago, a canon said, 'God gave you the gift of beauty,' as if God didn't need to give you anything else."

Last New Year's Eve, Francine and I were upstairs in her bedroom, sitting on her bed with our dogs, watching TV. Francine was wearing a long white linen sundress over a white T-shirt. She had on white cotton socks. I had on a long white cotton nightgown with thin straps, and I was cold, so Francine gave me a pale-blue-and-pink plaid flannel nightshirt to put over it. On one TV station, in an old black-and-white program from the fifties, Guy Lombardo and his brothers were singing "I Found a Million-Dollar Baby in a Five-and-Ten-Cent Store." Francine got out two white masks, a shiny green noisemaker, a fake white rose, and a tall black hat with a magenta-and-blue striped hatband. Those things just sat there in a small pile on her bed, as a little homage to times gone by. The Lombardo brothers sang a song called "Boo-Hoo," and I felt like crying: there was an aura of finality under our feigned gaiety. Francine didn't seem to feel like crying. She never does.

I've always had a close-to-irrational hatred for people who disliked Francine because she was beautiful. Some of them were dismissive of beauty itself, as if it were an annoying little blockade in the way of whatever their agenda was. Nowadays, beautiful women have different ways of dealing with their beauty; the rules that Francine lived by don't work the way they used to. Women just don't spend the whole day getting ready to go out on a date. Even back then, though, when beauties were beauties and they all acted that way, Francine was not exactly a welcome presence among people we knew in New York or Los Angeles: men were, and are, vulnerable to her beauty; women now not only are envious but view her strategies as outdated and silly. Nevertheless, Francine can still be almost wildly jubilant about what kind of man she might marry next time, or about some highlights that have just been put in her hair, or about a new suit from Neiman Marcus. I can tell she thinks—for a moment or so—that because her hair and her suit are "so pretty" there's nothing in her life that can't be solved. In this way, the trappings of her beauty are her salvation. But, as it has been for as long as I've known her, the actual salvation, like the actual beauty, is not on the surface. The other night on the phone—she was putting clothes into the dryer—she told me that her looks had always made her feel "alien." Then she said, "When you get older and let yourself get out of shape—I was always so thin and so perfect—people treat you the way they treat other people. They treat you like a person." It was not at all a downtrodden thing to say; she hates negativity, and she sounded happy. ♦

The Secret Student.

Within every student is
the Student That Might Be.
Hoosac, a leading accredited boarding school, unlocks the hidden potential of the "secret student" within with Mastery Teaching, individual attention, and a student/teacher ratio of 5:1.
Summer School runs from July 7 to August 15. Write
Hoosac School, Hoosick, NY 12089
or call (800) 822-0159
HOOSAC SCHOOL
Since 1889

Experience Ultimate "DOWN UNDER"

Join one of **Orient Flexi-Pax**'s escorted journeys or customized programs for the discriminating traveler to Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tahiti and Tasmania.

Travel on the legendary **Ghan Train** and New Zealand's scenic **Trans Alpine Express**. Enjoy an authentic farm-stay. Swim, snorkel and relax at the wondrous **Great Barrier Reef**. For information and brochures please call **Orient Flexi-Pax Tours**:

ORIENT FLEXI-PAX TOURS
A Division of Isram World of Travel
800-545-5540
ext.249

TABLETOP GREENHOUSE COMPANY

A unique and lasting delight for gardeners and miniaturists! Grow real miniature plants in this charming tabletop greenhouse. Each greenhouse is handmade to scale (1"=1') of glass and blackened copper trim. Actual dimensions: 8"x10"x10½".

$185 plus tax, shipping, and handling. Includes greenhouse, miniature clay pots and tools, potting benches, gravel, and growing instructions. $135 for greenhouse only. Call (617) 235-2382 to order or for *more information.*

P.O. Box 81510, Wellesley, MA 02181-0001

OK MOZART Festival
June 13-21
Ransom Wilson, *Artistic Director*
Bartlesville, Oklahoma
918-336-9900 www.webtek.com/okmozart

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA
Retire to Fearrington, a Country Village full of bluebirds, hollyhocks, and fascinating people of all ages. Please write, call or come and see us.
VISIT OUR WEBSITE: http://www.fearrington.com
2000N Fearrington Post, Pittsboro, NC 27312. 800-277-0130

PERSONAL HISTORY

WATER BABIES

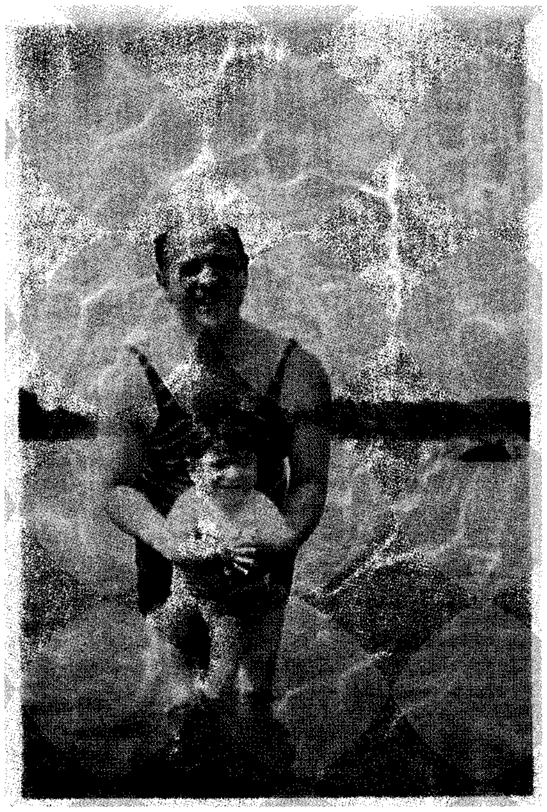
Why I love to swim.

BY OLIVER SACKS

We were all water babies, all four of us. Our father, who was a swimming champ (he won the fifteen-mile race off the Isle of Wight three years in succession) and loved swimming more than anything else, introduced each of us to the water when we were scarcely a week old. Swimming is instinctive at this age, so, for better or worse, we never "learned" to swim.

I was reminded of this recently when I visited the Caroline Islands, in Micronesia, where I saw even toddlers diving fearlessly into the lagoons and swimming, typically, with a sort of dog paddle. Everyone there swims, nobody is "unable" to swim, and the islanders' swimming skills are superb. Magellan and other navigators, reaching Micronesia in the sixteenth century, were astounded at such skills and, seeing the islanders swim and dive, bounding from wave to wave, could not help comparing them to dolphins. The children, in particular, were so at home in the water that they appeared, in the words of one explorer, "more like fish than human beings." (It was from the Pacific Islanders that, early in this century, we Westerners learned the crawl, the beautiful, powerful ocean stroke that they had perfected—so much better, so much more fitted to the human form than the froglike breaststroke chiefly used until that time.)

For myself, I have no memory of being taught to swim; I learned my strokes, I think, by swimming with my father—though the slow, measured, mile-eating stroke he had (he was a powerful man who weighed nearly eighteen stone) was not entirely suited to a little boy. But I could see how my old man, huge and cumbersome on land, became transformed—graceful, like a porpoise—in the water; and I, self-conscious, nervous, and also rather clumsy, found the same delicious transformation in myself, found a new being, a new mode of being, in the water. I have a vivid memory of a summer holiday at the seaside, in England, the month after my fifth birthday, when I ran into my parents' room and tugged at the great whalelike bulk of my father. "Come on, Dad!" I said. "Let's come for a swim." He turned over slowly and opened one eye: "What do you mean, waking an old man of forty-three like this at six in the morning?" Now that my father is dead, and I myself am sixty-three, this memory of so long ago tugs, makes me equally want to laugh and cry.



The author with his father: There is an essential rightness about swimming.

MARGARET RIEGEL/PHOTO COURTESY OF OLIVER SACKS

Adolescence was a bad time. I developed a strange skin disease: *Erythema annulare centrifugum*, said one expert; *Erythema gyratum perstans*, said another—fine, rolling, orotund words, but neither of the experts could do anything, and I was covered in weeping sores. Looking, or at least feeling, like a leper, I dared not strip at a beach or pool, and could only occasionally, if I was lucky, find a remote lake or tarn.

At Oxford, my skin suddenly cleared, and the sense of relief was so intense that I wanted to swim nude, to feel the water streaming over every part of me without hindrance. Sometimes I would go swimming, at dawn, at Parsons' Pleasure, a bend of the Cherwell, a preserve since the sixteen-eighties or earlier for nude bathing, and peopled, one felt, by the ghosts of Swinburne and Clough. On summer afternoons, I would take a punt on the Cherwell, find a secluded place to moor it, and then go swimming lazily for the rest of the day. Sometimes at night I would go for long runs on the towpath by the Isis, past Iffley Lock, far beyond the confines of the city. And then I would dive in and swim in the river, till it and I seemed to flow together, become one.

Swimming became a dominant passion at Oxford, and after this there was no going back. When I came to New York, in the mid-sixties, I started to swim at Orchard Beach, in the Bronx, and would sometimes make the circuit of City Island—a swim that took me several hours. This, indeed, is how I found the house I now live in: I had stopped about halfway around to look at a charming gazebo by the water's edge, got out and strolled up the street, saw a little red house for sale, was shown round it (still dripping) by the puzzled owners, walked along to the real-estate agent and convinced her of my interest (she was not used to customers in swim trunks), reëntered the water on the other side of the island, and swam back to Orchard Beach, having acquired a house in midswim.

I was exceedingly fond of lake swimming, too, and often rented a room in a dilapidated old hotel on Lake Jefferson, in upstate New York—a smallish (fifty-acre), somewhat shallow lake, where no one motorboated or water-skied, and where I could swim or float on my back all day without danger, in a realm beyond boundaries or time. Many of my happiest weekends were spent swimming in this little lake—many of my most productive weekends, too, for there is something about being in water and swimming which alters my mood, gets my thoughts going, as nothing else can. Theories and stories would construct themselves in my mind as I swam to and fro, or round and round Lake Jeff. Sentences and paragraphs would write themselves in my mind, and at such times I would have to come to shore every so often to discharge them. Most of "A Leg to Stand On" was written in this way, the paragraphs forming themselves during long swims at Lake Jeff and being discharged, every half hour or so, drippingly, onto paper. (My publisher was puzzled by the water smudges and the running ink on the manuscript, and insisted that I have it typed.)

I tended to swim outside—I was hardier then—from April through November, but would swim at the local Y in the winter. In 1976-77, I was Top Distance Swimmer at the Mount Vernon Y, in Westchester: I swam five hundred lengths—six miles—in the contest and would have continued, but the judges said, "Enough! Please go home." One might think that five hundred lengths would be monotonous, boring, but I have never found swimming monotonous or boring. Swimming gave me a sort of joy, a sense of well-being so extreme that it became at times a sort of ecstasy. There was a total engagement in the act of swimming, in each stroke, and at the same time the mind could float free, become spellbound, in a state like a trance. I never knew anything so powerfully, so healthily euphoriant—and I was addicted to it, am still addicted, fretful when I cannot swim.

Duns Scotus, in the thirteenth century, spoke of "*condelectari sibi*," the will finding delight in its own exercise; and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, in our own time, speaks about "flow." There is an essential rightness about swimming, as about all such flowing and, so to speak, *musical* activities. And then there is the wonder of buoyancy, of being suspended in this thick, transparent medium that supports and embraces us. One can move in water, play with it, in a way that has no analogue in the air. One can explore its dynamics, its flow, this way and that; one can move one's hands like propellers or direct them like little rudders; one can become a little hydroplane or submarine, investigating the physics of flow with one's own body.

And, beyond this, there is all the symbolism of swimming—its imaginative resonances, its mythic potentials.

My father called swimming "the elixir of life," and certainly it seemed to be so for him: he swam daily, slowing down only slightly with time, until the grand age of ninety-four. I hope I can follow him, and swim till I die. ◆

TRY A LITTLE TENDERNESS!®

SAVE $22.00!

One bite! That's all it takes. And you'll know you've never known better. World-famous Omaha Steaks FILET MIGNONS, aged to tender perfection, flash-frozen at the peak of flavor and delivered to your door in 3 business days (or less) ... guaranteed!

INTRODUCTORY OFFER!

Order #469, 6 (5 oz.)
FILET MIGNONS for only $29.99!
Regularly $51.99 • Save $22.00!
Order Today & Get
6 FREE 1/4 lb. GOURMET BURGERS!
Add $8.99 shipping/handling Limit 2 each at Special Price!
OFFER EXPIRES 6/30/97

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED!

TO ORDER, CALL TOLL FREE, RIGHT NOW
1-800-228-9055

PREMIUM HEARTLAND QUALITY
OMAHA STEAKS®
SINCE 1917
Dept. AD7054 • Email: autoinfo@omahasteaks.com

Just one or two weeks can make a difference.

Join an Earthwatch expedition to study timber wolves in Minnesota, save rainforests in Mexico, build solar ovens in Kenya... 150 leading scientists need your help now on 1-2 week research projects in fields from archaeology to ornithology. Expeditions in national parks and worldwide! Tax-deductible contributions support the research and cover food and lodging expenses. No experience necessary.

1.800.776.0188
www.earthwatch.org or email info@earthwatch.org
EARTHWATCH
any

WOMANSHIP
Learn to Sail Cruises
for and by women
Virgin Islands • Chesapeake Bay • Florida
New England • Pacific Northwest
Flotillas to Greece and New Zealand
"Womanship . . . the unique philosophy that confidence and team work are as important as the skills learned."
800/342-9295

Insider Art Tours
London/Paris October 1997
Designed exclusively for artists, art connoisseurs and the intellectually curious.
College credits available.
THE ACADEMY OF REALIST ART
(206)784-4268
5004C 6th Ave NW, Seattle WA 98107 RealistArt@aol.com

A REPORTER AT LARGE

AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Since 1979, Iran's borders have been sealed to many visitors, and extraordinary, almost mythical events—especially the Great War with Iraq—have gone largely unreported. A week before Iran's elections, the author reports on his first visit since the Revolution.

BY V. S. NAIPAUL

I—THE GREAT WAR

THE Tehran I went to in August, 1979, seven months after the Revolution, was like an imagined city, a modern metropolis whose life had been miraculously suspended: the international advertisements still up but the goods not always there (and "Kentucky Fried Chicken" angrily relettered to "Our Fried Chicken," with the face of the Southern colonel smudged and redrawn); the cranes arrested on a dozen unfinished towers; the bad meals in empty restaurants—rubbery sturgeon in brown sauce in the almost empty but impeccably laid-out dining room of a hotel still called the Royal Tehran Hilton on its crockery and bills and menus, where sullen black-tied waiters whispered and grumbled together, like people who knew their talents and style were no longer needed. Premonitions of decay; but, outside, there was the excitement of the immense crowds at Friday prayers at Tehran University (crowds so great that their footsteps roared like the sea, and dust could be seen to rise above them as they walked), with the famous preachers shown live on television; and the Revolutionary Guards, in the guerrilla gear that was now like an attribute of the faith, driving round very fast in Japanese station wagons to proclaim their possession of the city.

I was staying this time at the Hyatt. It wasn't absolutely the Hyatt now: it was the Azadi Grand Hotel (ex-Hyatt). *Azadi* means "freedom." All the five-star hotels of Iran had been taken over by the state and renamed, and handed over to the Foundation for the Oppressed (the name mocking the Shah's Pahlavi Foundation). But people still spoke of the Hyatt. It was on the outskirts of the city, in northern Tehran, up in the mountains.

The polished marble floor of the big lobby was reassuring, and there were people at the desk even at three o'clock in the morning. But the piece of carpet in the lift was dirty and stained and didn't fit. The gilt of the lift doors, part of the original Hyatt glamour, had been torn or worn away in places, and could be seen now to be only a laminate, like the laminate that covers a credit card. The hotel porters were all in open-necked shirts; this was one of the badges of the Revolution. The collars had sagged into irregular folds below the jacket lapels, and looked at this dead time like a kind of grubby low ruff. Many of the porters were unshaven: this was Islamic. Some were shiny-faced and dirty. This was social defiance: the two styles of revolution, the religious and the political, running together.

Outside the café area there was a framed poster of a woman with her head covered. Mehrdad, the university student who was my guide and interpreter, read the caption for me: "This is the picture of an innocent woman." The poster was in many public places in Tehran.

And there was the war, the eight-year war with Iraq. It was the inescapable theme. It was close, but it was also like something mythical, like something that had occurred a hundred years ago. Mehrdad, when he first talked about it, used strange language. He said, "It is a war that was lost." When I asked what it meant to him, he said, "Nothing." He didn't mean that; it was his way of speaking of an almost inexpressible pain.

Mehrdad's sister was in her early thirties. She was educated and not bad-looking, but there was no husband for her: there was a shortage of men because of the war. She had a job in a publishing company. In that, she was lucky; many young

A cemetery in Qum. Without the rest of the wo

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINE SPENGLER/SYGMA

iowing it, Iran had been fighting its own version of the First World War—a battle of attrition in the trenches, with more than a million killed.

women didn't have that opportunity of leaving the house; it wasn't easy in revolutionary Iran for unmarried women to have a social life or even to move about. When Mehrdad's sister left the office, she came home and stayed home. She stayed in her room much of the time. She was moody, Mehrdad said; she had become heavy, and had rages and often cried; their mother didn't know what to do for her.

Mehrdad's father had worked in a bank before the Revolution. After the Revolution, the banks were nationalized, and he lost his job. He managed to build up a little haberdashery business; that was how he had kept his family. Mehrdad—*going back a long way now, going back* to when he was eight—remembered that at the beginning of the Revolution the cry was the Communist "*Nun, Kar, Azadi*," "Bread, Work, Freedom." Within a year, it had changed to "Bread, Work, and an Islamic Republic."

There were religious rules now about every kind of public behavior, and there were green-uniformed Revolutionary Guards—their beards and guerrilla gear now the sign of authority, and not of young rebellion—to enforce the rules. Mehrdad took me late one afternoon to a park not far from the Hyatt. Young men and women went to the park to look at one another; the Guards also walked there, to catch them out. The girls, in small groups, were in black gowns and chadors. They were easy to see: black now, in this park, the quite startling color of female sexuality, making signals from afar. Mehrdad, thinking, no doubt, of his sister immured at home, said that the girls, some of them already women, were older than they should have been, because men were now scarce.

On either side of very wide steps in one part of the park there were busts, remarkably alike, of the great men of Islamic Iran: the Islamic Revolution producing a kind of Soviet art in a park for the people.

Just as in the old Communist countries the news in the neutered papers had been principally of other Communist countries, so the news in the English-language Tehran *Times* was of the Muslim world. In between, there were local items: the trial of three terrorists of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq organization; a shortage of spare parts in the oil industry because of the United States trade embargo; the currency going down.

There was censorship, of course; there was no secret about that. There was an especial cruelty about book censorship. Every book had to be submitted to the censors not in typescript but in its printed and finished form, and after the full print run. It made for a passionate and searching self-censorship. However much you wanted to be in the clear, though, you couldn't always be sure that you were. Was music all right? There were different opinions. Was chess all right, or was it a form of gambling? Eventually, Ayatollah Khomeini had said it was all right; and that had become the law.

The lifts with the peeling-gilt doors had never been in good shape. They broke down, and sometimes, after mending, the sequence of their grating journeys up and down the shaft became disordered. The air-conditioning in my room failed. "*Kharab*," the man downstairs said. "Broken." And that was all. I was prepared to stick it out, but when Mehrdad heard he got the hotel to give me a room at the back, out of the afternoon sun, and with a view of the mountains to the north.

On sunny days, from my new room, I saw light and cloud shadows constantly model and remodel the ridges and the dips of the bare, beige-colored mountains. On cloudy days, the further hills faded in color, range by range; and the low hills in the foreground seemed to come forward, defined by the paleness behind, and became brown or tawny or gold. The cropped or sun-beaten vegetation sometimes appeared very soft. The green of trees going up the hills stopped abruptly. The lower hills seemed levelled for further building.

ARASH was twenty-seven. He had been at the front for the last four years of the war. For the first two of those years, when he was sixteen and seventeen, he had been a volunteer; after that, he had been a conscript. Now he was a taxi-driver. Arash was not a driver for an agency, which would have given him a certain standing; he drove his personal car back and forth along fixed routes, picking up fares, using his car like a bus, and he almost certainly had no taxi license.

We went to a café in northern Tehran, a middle-class place, glass-walled, on a busy chinar-lined avenue. The chinar is the Oriental plane tree, loved for its beauty there and in Kashmir (where its shade is even said to be medicinal), and it is often naturalistically rendered in Persian and Mughal painting.

It was midafternoon, and the café—serving ice cream, sorbets, tea—was full of women in black chadors, family women. About the café and the women there was a latent elegance. It was as though the yearning in women for beauty and style couldn't now, at this level, be suppressed in Iran; it was a kind of disobedience.

When Arash volunteered to fight, in

FRONT BAR OF THE LONE STAR

Fat flesh egg
400 lbs. of him
set firmly on
the toothpick stool.
Fat, fat.
Styles change:
use a new word
and what you see is new.
Great not gross now,
chubby not fat.
Great flesh daddy,
chubby-chaser's delight.
Contempt or pity
of twenty years
melted in admiration

Some feet distant,
what slender youth!
gaze fixed on
this dream of quantity.
Encouraged, squeezes
to the adjacent stool:
just enough room
for flirting from.

The point of the heart-shaped Raphael face
gave way to
the sporty chin
of the Gibson girl.
Styles change.
The democracy of it:
eventually everyone
can hope for a turn
at being wanted.

—THOM GUNN

1984, he became what was known as a Basiji. Basijis were paramilitaries recognized by the headbands they wore. These headbands could be red, or green, or white, or black, though what was usually shown on television in Iran and abroad was the red headband. Red was the symbol of blood and sacrifice and the faith.

Arash took part in eleven advances as a Basiji. For seven of these, he was at the front. At the start of his time, it was still the custom for religious chanters to come to the front before every advance and whip the men up. The chanters would chant, and the men would beat their chests rhythmically with one hand or—if the war situation was serious—with two hands together. Sometimes the chanters were very famous, known all over Iran. A very famous chanter came to Arash's unit before the fourth or fifth attack.

Even if no professional chanter came before an attack, there would always be someone among the men who could lead the others in the ceremony. The chanting was done in as melancholy a voice as possible. What was being chanted was not the Koran but devotional songs, and often devotional songs made famous by famous singers.

Mehrdad said, "If you go to a school, there is always somebody who knows these sad songs. And he can lead others in chanting." (Later that evening, in the hotel room, when I was checking my notes with Mehrdad, he gave me a demonstration of the kind of chest-beating Arash was talking about. In less than half a minute, he made the room seem small with his hypnotic drumming.)

The chanting ceremony usually lasted two hours. When the very famous chanter came to Arash's section, the chanting went on for six hours, because this famous man had the voice and lungs and stamina.

The chanting filled the men with thoughts of death and martyrdom and going to Paradise and having freedom. After this, the men were quiet for half an hour or longer, but never for more than ninety minutes. And then the attack began, usually at two-thirty in the morning. In the quiet period between the end of the chanting and the start of the attack, the men wrote letters and wills, and fixed their shoes and made sure their underpants were clean.

Mehrdad said, "Many people performed religious ablutions before an attack, because they thought that an attack was a holy action, and that one should be nice and clean for it. And, since it could end in martyrdom, they would see their God in a clean body and clean clothes."

After two years of voluntary service as a Basiji, Arash went home, and then almost immediately it was time for his regular military service. After two months of training, he went to the front again.

I asked Arash, "You were going to do your military service anyway. Why did you volunteer as a Basiji?"

"It was what my friends did. Twenty-five per cent of them. They put it in our heads."

"They?"

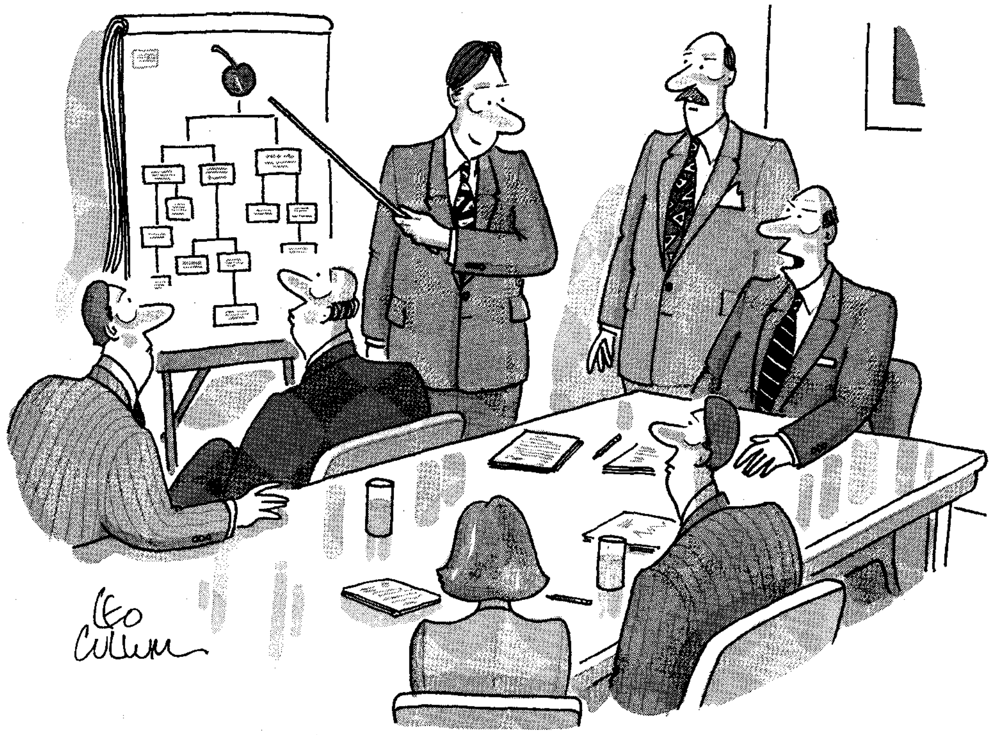
"The television and radio, and the speakers outside mosques. Magazines, newspapers, everything."

They made him feel that he was fighting for Islam, first of all. And then nation and family, both together.

Mehrdad said, "The word he is using is a very strong word. It is *namus*. It suggests a protective feeling for the women of one's family. It is a word that might be used for one's feeling about one's country—or one's gun." There was a funny story. It came from the time of the Shah's father, Reza Shah. He was inspecting some soldiers. He asked one of them, lifting up the man's gun, "What is this in your hand?" "This is a gun." Reza Shah became angry and said, "Akbar, this isn't a gun. It is your *namus*. It is your mother, your wife, your daughter. You must keep it and protect it." He went further down the line and reached Ahmed. Ahmed was a Turk from the north—Iranians make jokes about the Turks. Reza Shah lifted up Ahmed's gun and said, "What is this?" Ahmed said, "This is Akbar's *namus*. This is Akbar's mother, wife, daughter."

When Arash left the Basijis and joined the Army for his military service, he was selected, after his two months' training, for a special commando regiment. He went to the supporting line about twelve miles from the front. He slept that first night until noon. He was on a hill. He woke up and began to go up the hill to the "assembling place." A rocket hit down the hill from him, and he was blown thirty feet away. He was unconscious for about a day. When he came to, drips were stuck in his arm, and he felt a numbness down his side.

He said, in the window alcove in the café, with the traffic outside, and the middle-class ladies in black chadors having ice cream and tea at the other tables, "And I still feel something." And—nine and a half years after his wound—he passed a searching,



"Just how long has there been a maraschino cherry at the top of the organizational chart?"

caressing hand down his left thigh.

He was in the field hospital for seventeen days. They didn't let him go back to Tehran. He said to them that the Basijis could return to their home cities when they wanted. They didn't listen. They sent him to the assembling place.

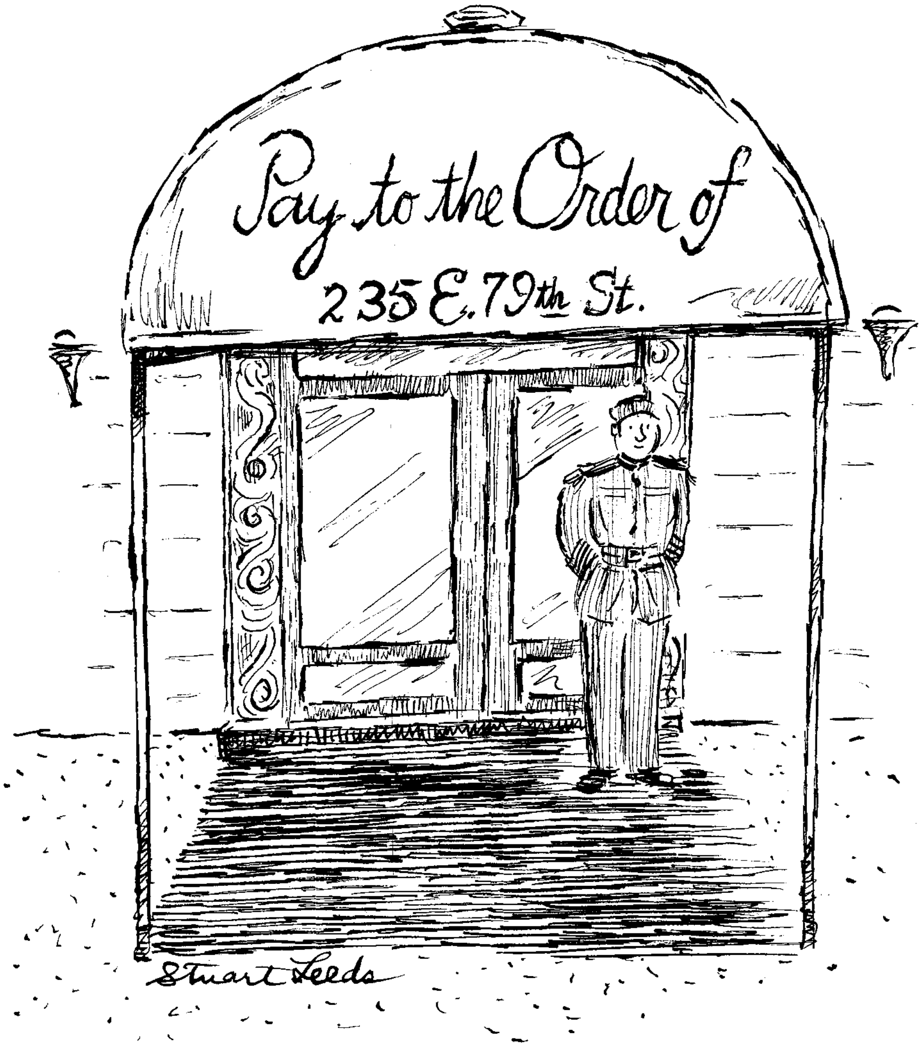
A special memory Arash had was of a time when for some days he was directly facing the Iraqi positions. He saw a glint from the Iraqi side: the sun catching a wristwatch, he thought. He saw the glint again, and decided it wasn't an accident. He flashed back with his own watch, and there was an answering flash. They played that game for a while. On later days, they used binoculars to flash at one another.

It was like the stories from the First World War of the passing fraternization between men fighting one another on the Western Front. Arash wouldn't have known about that. His story spoke of the great weariness on both sides toward the end. But he didn't make the point; he made no point at all. He told the story simply as an oddity of the war.

When his obligatory military service was over, he stayed on in the Army voluntarily for four more months. He had made friends there, and he left with one of his friends. They went together to Shiraz. They slept in a park. In the morning, they heard that Ayatollah Khomeini had died. That was a very sad moment for Arash.

And Tehran now, at the end of the war, was a great letdown. "In Tehran, it was wedding parties. Two of my friends had been martyred. And there, in the same alley, with their funeral, was a wedding party. At the front, it was Islam and war. Here in Tehran people were talking about fashions and music. On the Voice of America, we could hear Iranian people asking for new records to be played. In Tehran, nobody cared about the war."

Worst of all, he found that in Tehran the Basijis had a bad reputation. They hounded people for violating Islamic rules, and they extorted money from them.



Mehrdad said, "They are people who think they have lost something. They think the rich people have stolen it from them. So they can be aggressive."

Arash had spoken with great openness. But something was missing. The war he had told us about was a war without death. He had spoken of his own wound from the rocket; he had spoken of sheep being driven across minefields to detonate the mines. But that was all. Even when we asked him about the martyrs' battalions, he said only that during the attacks the martyrs' battalions went first, then the regular Army battalions, and behind them the supporting battalions. He wanted to talk about the war, but he didn't want to talk about death.

Later, when we had left the café and were in the car, and daylight had gone, I asked him directly, "Did you see many people killed?"

He really didn't want to answer. But he said after a while, "A regiment of fourteen hundred men went on an attack. And only four hundred came back."

"What do you think of that now?"

"I am indifferent." It was like what Mehrdad had said to me; and, like Mehrdad, Arash was really saying that he couldn't express his pain.

"I feel you are a lonely man."

"I prefer to be alone."

A little later, he said, "Everyone was looking for Ali's justice. But after a while they saw it wasn't getting done." Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, the fourth caliph of Islam and known for the wisdom of his judgments, was murdered on his way to the mosque in 661 A.D., and has ever since been the focus of Shia reverence and grief.

I said, "Do you think you can get such a thing as Ali's justice in the world again?"

"Never. Even in those days, he had many difficulties. He was a great man, and in a short period of time he had many enemies, and he couldn't do it. It is always like that."

Arash had reached that conclusion when he was twenty.

ONE morning, my breakfast was brought up by the chambermaid. She was fat and brassy, with a shiny, unwashed face, and a definite smell from wearing so many clothes, some of them

CARCINOCO
TOBACCO PRODUCTS
THANK YOU FOR NOT SUING
M. Stevens

• •

perhaps of synthetic material. The Persian cheese (from Denmark) came with a slice of toast, a thick piece of purple-tinted, lacklustre onion, cut some time before, and a leaf of lettuce, curiously supine, which might also have been laid out some time before. Onion and lettuce leaf (typhoid was about) immediately suppressed appetite; and the Nescafé sachet was good only for one lukewarm cup. Hip-swinging and aggressive in her monklike garb, the maid came in again after a little while to take away the tray; and when, not long afterward, she came for the third time, to ask whether I wanted the bed made up, she was chewing toast—everything in her mouth showing, though she was overcovered everywhere else—and I believe the toast was from my breakfast tray.

Early that afternoon—I was working in my room—the laundry came back, the shirts laundered and nice in plastic bags. The other clothes came in a fancy cardboard box printed with the name of the hotel. The box was new to me. I thought it out of character with the austere style of the hotel and the Foundation for the Oppressed; and when I opened it I found my clothes unlaundered, absolutely as I had sent them in the morning. I telephoned the concierge. He sent the laundry manager up. The laundry manager was embarrassed. He took away the clothes and, in absurdly quick time, brought them back, ironed and warm (even if not washed) and in new plastic bags.

When at last I went to the lobby, I found that a "Down with U.S.A." sign was no longer above the Omega clocks. After fifteen years, the awkward, angular characters had been unscrewed, leaving spectral impressions along the screw marks. The moment seemed to me historic; perhaps it meant that things were going to change in some way. But the next day a much longer, flowing, copper-colored line of Persian went up above the clocks, and it apparently said the same thing with more style.

VARIABLE sun and moving clouds modelled and remodelled the mountains to the north, lighting up this section, then that, showing up spaces between ranges, revealing an unsuspected ridge there, a valley here, revealing range behind range, and the textures of rock abraded by winter snow. Sometimes a rain cloud, shredding on a high range and filling the indentations and striations of rock, looked like snow.

II—SALT LAND

ALI, a man of about sixty, had made his fortune as a developer in the Shah's time. (His name and some others have been changed.) At some point in the early seventies, before the great oil boom, Ali had had the luck—and wisdom, and money—to buy a big tract of salt land in southern Iran. He bought it at less than half a toman a square foot (a toman is ten rials, then about thirteen United States cents); three or four years later, when the boom had come, and Iran was growing fast, he sold some of his salt land as building land for more than a thousand tomans a square foot. So—just to play with extraordinary figures—an investment of no more than ten thousand dollars, say, had turned after three or four years into a little fortune of nearly four million dollars.

Such a fortune would have been enough to keep most people calm. But Ali moved the other way. He became a supporter of the Revolution. He said, "Now that we had the money, the financial security, we wanted liberty. It was the one thing we didn't have." As a student abroad during the nineteen-sixties, he became passionate about politics; and he had grown to feel ashamed that he came from a country that wasn't free. He had never lost that feeling. So when the Revolution appeared to be coming in Iran, Ali supported it morally and financially. He did this through an ayatollah who had become his friend.

Ali's ideas of revolution came from his reading, especially of history. But there was also a supporting or congruent touch of religion. He said, "We expected a revolution based on heavenly laws and laws of nature." Heavenly laws: it was his version of Arash's search for the justice of Ali.

Many different ideas and impulses ran together in the making of the Revolution. So when the Revolution came there were—just below the apparent unanimity—any number of conflicting interests. And Ali, as a rich man, had suffered; the Revolution had treated him roughly.

He was slender, of middle height, his Persian features quite regular. Physically he was not remarkable; it might have been part of his camouflage. His quality as a man was something that grew on you. His slenderness, for instance, might have seemed natural to him; in fact it was the result of regular exercise. His work, his business, his almost angry wish to survive had kept him healthy and alert. The strain showed more on his wife. She had lost much of her hair; she still had a graciousness, but it lay over a deep, wounded melancholy.

SOME people Ali knew turned against the Revolution during the first month. Ali gave it more time. But when the executions began, he had serious doubts. People who had done nothing were arrested and taken to jail. Many of them disappeared. "Then they started charging into people's houses, confiscating their property. We had no security for our property or our children or our wives." I felt that the word in Ali's mind was the word Mehrdad had introduced me to: *namus.*

A revolutionary court, known as the court of Islamic justice, had been set up about a month after the Revolution. One of Ali's best friends was second-in-command in that court, and Ali used to go every day to see what he could do to save people he knew. "That court was going almost twenty-four hours a day. Khalkhali was the master of that court"—Ayatollah Khalkhali, Khomeini's famous hanging judge. "He used this court as the instrument of his executions. It was on Dr. Shariati Street. Before the Revolution it was a military court. The Shah had set up this court to try his opponents. Almost the same people who had set up this court were now tried in it, in the same building."

Ali told me that Tudeh, the Communist Party, infiltrated every branch of the new government. Its members even went to the Friday prayers in the mosques. They showed themselves to be people of God. The Communist Party in those early days had put itself entirely at the service of Khomeini. It didn't want executive power; its members were content to be counsellors. And they were behind the nationalization of banks, insurance companies, factories. They gave the government its Soviet-style aspect and official demeanor.

Life for Ali wasn't easy. It was impossible to work. The new officials were hostile; they looked upon him as part of the old regime. Some people in Ali's company began to agitate against him. Two or three of them would come to his office to "question" him. He had to buy them off. And at the end of the first year he was kidnapped.

"I was on my land. We were building houses. They came in a car, three or four of them. They asked me to help them in a building project they had. I got in the car, and they drove me away. They kept me ten miles away in a desert area and questioned me as in a court. It was in a little shanty house, a shepherd's shelter. They were young boys. They had seen a lot of cinema. Now they had guns in their hands."

The guns were from the armories of the Shah's Army. When the Army collapsed, and it collapsed suddenly, many people ran to the armories to get guns. According to Ali, in the first four months of the Revolution the guns were piled up at the university; and a gun was given away to anyone who could show an identity card.

He thought now that he should move carefully with these boys, in order to find out just how many more were behind them. Perhaps there was no one else. Perhaps there were four thousand, and they were planning to hold him for ransom. They talked for ten hours in the shepherd's hut in the desert. At last, they said they were going to release him, but he had to pay them. He didn't want to pay them too much; he didn't want to encourage others. He promised very small sums. The boys were enraged. They threatened to kill him. They threatened to destroy his building company. But he didn't promise more.

He said, "I was very strict."

And in the end he was released. But this kidnapping added to his insecurity. There were five million people in Tehran; and it seemed that any four of the five million could come with guns to demand money. And all the time now there was trouble with local officials. A year into the Revolution, Ali was being pushed from every side, by government people, by Communists within the government, and by simple agitators. He was kidnapped three or four more times.

There was now, too, constant harassment from the Revolutionary Guards, jumping into the garden and looking through the windows to see whether anyone was looking at satellite television or videos, or breaking into the house to search for alcohol or ham or women's dresses or men's neckties, all now forbidden things.

"And if you were cleanly dressed they didn't like it. They would attack you. It was like Pol Pot, but not so extreme. Ten per cent. But it was a full revolution."

"A full revolution?"

"The reins of government went altogether out of the hands of government, out of control. It was anarchy and terror. The reason was Khomeini himself. About three months after the Revolution, I was taken by my ayatollah friend to meet Mr. Khomeini. The ayatollah friend had explained to Khomeini that I was a developer and a technical man and could help with housing problems. I and the ayatollah friend and Khomeini were sitting together on the ground in Khomeini's house. The door opened. Some mullahs came in. Khomeini started talking with them. Later, some more mullahs came in. And it went on and on until the room was full of mullahs, two hundred of them. And they all wanted money to take to their students and to religious organizations in their own towns. Khomeini said he didn't have money to give to all of them. Then he said, 'Go to your own towns. Find the first man who is rich or the first man who has a factory or a huge farm. And force him to pay you.' "

This language from the head of the government shocked Ali. And this was when he realized that Khomeini was leading his people into chaos.

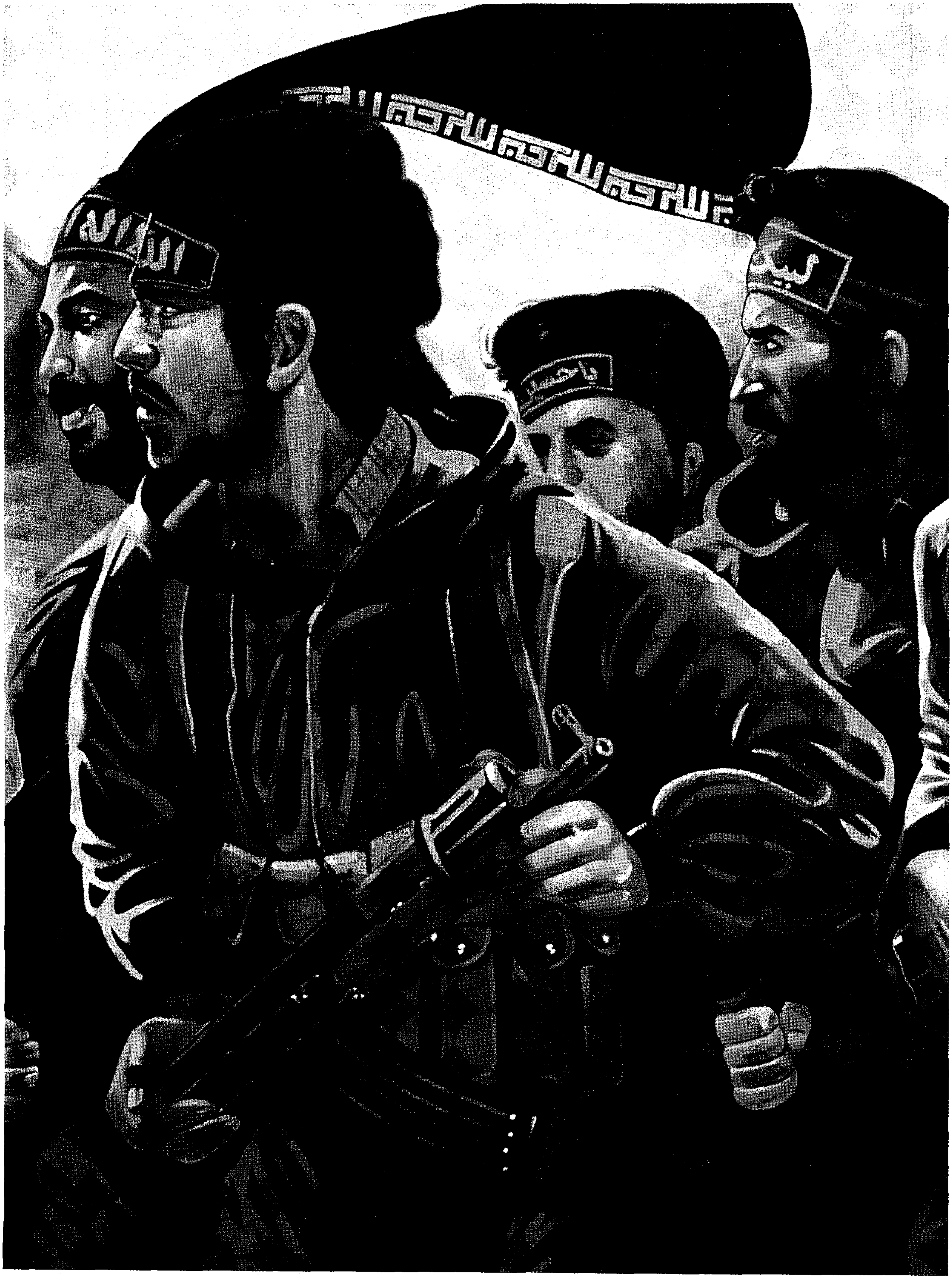
A lawyer friend of Ali's had come into the room and was sitting with us. He said, "Khomeini's mental discipline was different from other people's. He was a man of the people. He understood the majority of the people. The majority were not educated. They wanted money and things. They didn't want revolution. They wanted money, and Khomeini knew that."

Ali said, "The majority wanted to loot."

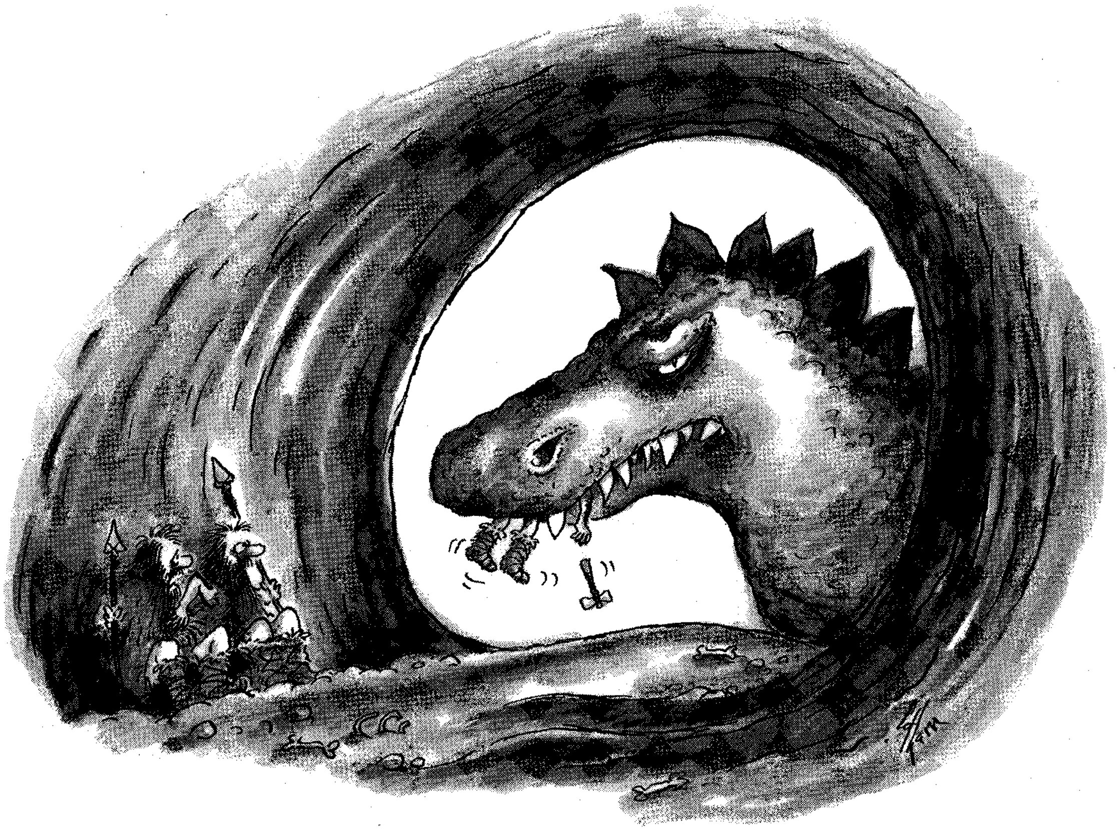
The lawyer said, "So he made disorder in the country and let them loot. He did what they wanted."

Ali said, "When Khomeini said, 'Fol-

SHEPARD SHERBELL/SABA



Before an attack, there was a lot of weeping and wailing. A speaker would say, "Some of you will see God tomorrow."



"He was just a year away from retirement."

low the law,' it wasn't the law of the country. It was his law, the law in his own mind. He wanted complete chaos. That day in his house I realized this man is not a man of government. He was still a revolutionary. He couldn't control himself. Until the very last day, he was making disorder."

Ali added, "He had an instinctive brain. He was instinctively intelligent. An instinctive, animal intelligence. Because of this, he could command the people. He did not have an educated intelligence. He didn't become emotional. He was very cool."

At our next meeting, Ali had a memory to add to his story of being in Khomeini's house, three months after the Revolution. The two hundred mullahs were in the room, asking Khomeini for money, and he had told them to go back to their districts and take it from the first rich man they met. That had appeared to satisfy most of the mullahs. But—as in an "Arabian Nights" tale—one of the mullahs had said, "My town is very poor. In my town there is no rich man." Khomeini, in a kind of reflex, had touched Ali's sleeve, and for a terrible moment—long enough for him to remember it seventeen years later—Ali had thought he was about to be sacrificially offered to that very poor mullah.

And, in fact, something like that happened fifteen months later. Ali was arrested by the local revolutionary court. A number of charges were made against him: strengthening the royal regime, grabbing millions of square feet of people's land, transferring billions of United States dollars abroad, directing a failed coup d'état against the government, directing an anti-revolutionary organization. The accusations were not specific; they were formal, standard accusations, and they were made against many people.

Ali said, "When they set up revolutionary courts, they came after people like me. The Guards were all from rural backgrounds. They had their own special accent. They were very young, and were happy with their triggers. Many of them later died in the war. I would say that there was a mixture of forty per cent mujahideen and sixty per cent Muslim groups. The mujahideen, Marxists, had infiltrated the revolutionary courts from the very beginning. They didn't identify themselves; they pretended to be Muslims."

Ali was held for six months. The revolutionary prison was an old factory shed that had been divided up. There were a few cells for people being kept in solitary confinement; two big compounds for social prisoners, people like opium smugglers and thieves; and a big cell for political prisoners. The political prisoners included people from the Tudeh Party, although at that time their leaders were still coöperating with the government. There were members of mujahideen groups, although the mujahideen had not yet started their war against the government. And there were extreme Maoists. The government, in fact, was quietly beginning to destroy the left.

"When they had the executions, somehow we would find out the night before. We would turn off the lights very early in the evening and pretend we were asleep. Then about twelve at night the lights would go on in the garden in the courtyard, and we could see the executions from afar without the guards' knowing about it. There was a local mullah who had those high powers in the revolutionary court—confiscation, imprisonment, and death."

After some time, Ali's trial was announced. People were invited to make whatever charges they wanted to against him and submit whatever incriminating documents they had. There were seven sessions in the mullah's court, and the case against Ali was dismissed.

As Ali remembers it, the mullah judge said, "I am not a man of Islamic revolution. But I have made this Revolution to bring Islam. There is a distinction between the two. I want to make a house in Heaven. I don't want to make a house in Hell. A rich man is not necessarily guilty, unless I find some guilt in him. You may not be a good Muslim, but I find you not guilty."

Things became quieter for Ali after the trial. There were still problems, many problems. Life was never easy now, and perhaps he would never feel secure. But the kind of revolutionary who had prejudged him as a rich man and tormented him during the first three years of the Revolution was not so dominant now in the courts and government departments. The government had got rid of many of the wilder people, and those who remained in office had become less hard with the years. Power had corrupted many of them. Some had made a lot of money and gone into business for themselves. People in power could still be obstructive; but they were easier to read now, and there were ways of dealing with them.

And after all this there was melancholy in Ali's house. It showed in his wife's face, which spoke of an unassuageable grief for what was really a lost life.

On the mountains to the north, morning light cast shadows in the dips and hollows. Every irregularity—of abraded rock, or of rockfall down a slope—was picked out. The morning light also showed the extent to which the lower mountains had been built up in various places, with the cutting of new terraces—cement-colored below the beige—for further building. In the evening, small broken lines of lights could be seen on what should have been bare mountainside. In the morning, those lights disappeared, and there seemed to be nothing.

And then one day, walking in the area, I learned that on one of the low tawny hills, to the left of my hotel window, was Evin prison, the scene of many executions. The address of the Azadi Hyatt was Evin Crossroads.

I had noticed the beginnings of terraces in one place and a path winding up in another place, and a kind of stepped great wall going up and disappearing around one side of the hill and reappearing far away on the other side. I had felt that the stepped walls on both sides were linked, but I hadn't known what I was looking at. This was partly because of the play of light on the mountains.

Now that I knew it was a prison, I was amazed that, though I had looked at it for many days, I had seen it merely as part of the view and hadn't wondered about it: a monstrous concrete hangar of a building, sand-colored, rising above the green of the poplars and chinars. Over the next two or three days, the plan of the prison and the prison grounds became clearer, detail by detail. The asphalt road winding up through the deceptive green to the guardhouse at the entrance; the long, low buildings, like railway sheds—perhaps workshops—at the foot of the hangar; and, a little lower, concrete apartment blocks, staff quarters no doubt, not quite as residential as they had seemed to me. I had thought of those blocks as developers' clutter on a beautiful hillside; they—or the idea I had had about them—had helped to camouflage the prison.

The prison was so extensive, such a large part of northern Tehran, that it took a long time to read.

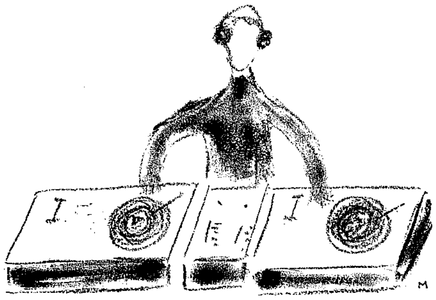
One afternoon, I saw a wall at the foot of the hill that was very high, and, in it, high blue gates, through which, no doubt, after the Revolution, the trucks came out at night with the bodies of the executed. Against the green and the brick and the concrete, the blue of the gates was noticeable; it made you wonder about the choice of the color.

Below the beautiful, many-charactered mountains, this presence: the great prison of Tehran, more awful and frightening than the castle of Prague.

Ayatollah Khalkhali, Khomeini's hanging judge, used to sit in judgment in the Revolutionary Court on Dr. Shariati Street, Ali had said. In the early days after the Revolution, that court used to sit almost around the clock, and Ali used to go every day to try to save people he knew. The prisoners would probably have been taken to Dr. Shariati Street from Evin.

In August, 1979, when I first went to Tehran, the court was still in full flow. Khalkhali, in an interview with the Tehran *Times*, said that he had "probably" sentenced three or four hundred people to death. On some nights, he said, the trucks had taken thirty or forty bodies out of the prison.

They would have left through the blue gates.



III—THE MARTYR

Mehrdad and I met Abbas in the office of a book publisher. Abbas was twenty-seven, and a war veteran. He had volunteered—giving up school to do so—when he was fourteen, in the second year of the war; and he had served right through. After the war, driven by spiritual need, he had done theological studies at Qum for three years, but then he had felt let down by Qum. Later, to please his girlfriend's family, he had got his high-school diploma and gone to the university. Now he was travelling about the country, gathering interviews from war veterans like him, for the publisher in whose office we were meeting. The publisher seemed to have a line in books about the war.

There were any number of veterans, and Abbas, with his military training, had worked out a procedure for getting many interviews at the same time. When he got to a new place, he would call veterans to something like a public meeting, hand out printed questionnaires, and tell war stories of his own, deliberately simple stories, about simple things, to encourage the veterans to lose their shyness or self-doubt and write down their own memories.

He now told us one of the stories he had told the veterans. Mehrdad, still close to his military experience, was so fascinated he didn't translate the story for me. His eyes shone; he never took them off Abbas.

Abbas was an arresting man, small, fine-limbed, classically handsome, with a neat, trimmed beard and a full, barbered head of neck-length hair. He had dressed with care for this meeting. He was wearing a green shirt with broad, shiny vertical stripes over a patterned light-and-dark ground. A spectacle case clipped to his waist was part of his style. The style was affecting, because the man had been damaged in the head, and had clearly overcome a great deal to be still so much himself. His eyes were bloodshot, unemotional, strangely staring; he moved his head slowly; he said his legs still hurt.

And yet after an hour of eating fruit and drinking tea and talking I had got nothing new from Abbas. And when the electricity failed in the neighborhood, and everything was suddenly dark all around, it seemed time to leave.

We stood up to say goodbye. It occurred to me, in the darkness, to ask whether in the course of his interviews he had met anyone from a martyrs' battalion who had survived. He said a few had survived. When I asked whether I could meet one of them, he didn't say anything. And then—it might have been the effect of the darkness, seeming to muffle life in the neighborhood, making us speak softly, so that the voices of children still playing in the street below were suddenly very clear against the roar of the boulevards not very far away; it might have been the drama of the power cut—something made Abbas say, hesitantly, "I shouldn't say this, but I was one."

And then we stayed and stayed. Abbas talked at first in the darkness and then by candlelight. The publishing house had a stock of candles, for these power cuts.

I made no notes. Later that evening, in the hotel, Mehrdad and I reconstructed what we had heard. I made my notes then.

WHEN Abbas said that he had been in one of the martyrs' battalions, much of what he had been saying earlier fell into place. He had volunteered at the age of fourteen. He had been taken close to the war, and then, on his own initiative, he had picked his way to the murderous Dezful front—the frontier town of Dezful had been utterly destroyed by the fighting.

He had no business, even as a Basiji, to be on his own in Dezful. The soldiers wanted to send him away, but he begged them, did things for them, and they allowed him to stay.

He was at Dezful at the time of a big Iranian attack. For twenty days, there was the sound of artillery and planes. And this was the time when Abbas had his first sight of death and martyrdom on the battlefield.

An ambulance came back from the front, and people ran to it. Abbas ran with them. At first he thought the people in the ambulance were only wounded. When they were placed on the ground he saw they were dead. Two of the dead men he had seen alive only two hours before. And he thought, I was looking for my friends. But these are not my friends. My friends are somewhere else. He felt then that death was an exalting and wonderful thing, and he knew that one day he would have to have the same experience and go where his friends were.

It was an intense spiritual moment, and it was heightened when he was washing the cartridge belts and harness straps of the dead men. That was one of the things he used to do at the front. Every day, he used to go to the morgue—officially called Meraj, the Place of Ascension—and collect the equipment from about forty dead men, which he would clean in the evening. There was a shortage of equipment, because so many men were involved in this big attack. There was also a shortage of shoes. In cleaning the equipment, Abbas would think of men who had now gone to a place they didn't quite know. And it was possible—Abbas's words were ambiguous—that he meant that, although the men didn't know where they were going, they had gone there straight and with determination.

A year later, Abbas joined the Basijis properly, and he became a member of a martyrs' battalion.

Before an attack, there was "a goodbye ceremony." Someone might sing; someone respected in the battalion, like a clergyman, a commander, an old man, or a popular man, might address the men. This person would stand on a podium or a chair and say, "Tomorrow, we have an attack." That was how the goodbye ceremony began. People would burst into tears right then; others would cry later. Generally, there was a lot of weeping and wailing. The speaker would say, "Some of you might not come back tomorrow. We might not see each other again. Some people will see God tomorrow."

Then there would be music and chanting. Abbas heard this as a thing in the background. Nobody could focus on it. Everybody was emptying himself of all feeling, pouring it into a common pool. In that pool there was a collection of miseries and worldly difficulties and family problems—a pregnant wife, perhaps, a sick baby, financial problems, quarrels with parents. Everything went into that common pool and disappeared. Joining this ceremony was like joining a ship. Whether you liked it or not, you had to go with it.

Abbas was wounded twice. The first time was during an Iraqi counterattack at noon, after the Iranians had attacked early in the morning. The people who were caught up in that counterattack were injured, the martyrs and a few fighters who wanted to delay the enemy advance. A rocket exploded near Abbas. He was hit in both legs and fell unconscious. It was night when he awakened. He heard Arabic voices and saw Iraqi soldiers at sixty-five-foot intervals, apparently standing guard. They were a picket line at the head

"He appears to have eaten some homework."

of the Iraqi advance. Abbas found a hand grenade and a machine gun. He threw the grenade at the Iraqis and killed four of them, and then he ran the fifty yards to the Iranian side. He was fired at, but he zigzagged and wasn't hit.

The second wound was more serious. It occurred a year later, at night, during one of the biggest Iranian attacks: attack after attack over a month. Again, there was a rocket burst near him. A bit of shrapnel struck him on the back of the head, and he was thrown to the ground. He fell on his head and was hurt badly. He passed in and out of consciousness many times. Finally he was taken by plane to the big military hospital in Shiraz.

There they inserted an artificial bone in his head. He lost his sense of balance; then he couldn't see. He had a clot on his retina, and there was a danger that he might lose his sight. A day came when the authorities wanted to take some of the patients to the shrine of Shah Cheragh, one of the famous shrines of Iran. Abbas wanted to go. He was in a wheelchair now. The doctor said he wasn't well enough to go, and Abbas shouted and began to quarrel with the doctor. The doctor relented, and Abbas was wheeled to the shrine at eight in the morning.

There was singing and chanting, as on the battlefield, and Abbas made a vow: "Allah, I accept whatever you wish, and I like whatever you like. But I cannot tell a lie to you. I need my eyes. If you give me back my eyes, I will use them to go back to the front."

At noon Abbas left the shrine with the rest of the patients and went back to the hospital. At two the nurse came to his room; as she opened the door Abbas saw the light and shouted. Doctors and nurses ran up. They saw that the clot on the retina had gone. They called other doctors to look. None of them believed that that kind of religious miracle could happen. Word got around. Something got into the papers. But Abbas was nervous about letting too much be known.

The publisher's assistant, constantly serving us tea, said, "And a good thing, too. If people had got to know about his cure at the shrine they might have rushed to him and torn bits of his clothes for keepsakes and magical purposes."

I had heard something like that in 1979 about people who were shot by the Shah's police during the demonstrations before the Revolution. Even a slight wound could be fatal, because when a man fell demonstrators ran to him to force their hands into the wound in order to stain them with the warm blood of a martyr.

"I was sent down to the minors and from there to Europe, and one thing just led to another."

• •

IN the publisher's office, by candlelight now, Abbas spoke of the effect of his experience on his faith. I had asked him.

This was Mehrdad's translation of a difficult idea, later in the hotel, and at the end of a long day. Let it stand as it was spoken: "On the battlefield we could see a lot of things that cannot be described in a materialist way. Here on the street there are lots of people who have a little injury, and they need to lie down. But over there the enemy was coming, and this boy was running from the enemy with one arm blown off. It showed me what's possible. And at the moment I don't care about my aches at all. I pay no attention to them."

He felt he should improve his spiritual feelings, and he thought he could do this with study and scholarship. So he went to the holy city of Qum, and enrolled in a five-year course. He completed it in three years. And by then he had had enough of study. He didn't feel he had got in Qum what—perhaps innocently—he had been hoping for. Study was study. The spirituality he was concerned with was more personal; it didn't come through study. There were many examples of people with much religious learning but without spirituality.

In the outside world there was, a year or two later, another test for him. He fell in love with a girl and wanted to marry her. He went to her family and asked for her hand. They told him that he had to go to the university first; their daughter was a university student. This was a hard thing to ask of Abbas, Mehrdad said; because in Iran you couldn't be considered for a university place if you didn't have a high-school diploma; and Abbas had left his very good Tehran school at the age of fourteen to go to the war.

But Abbas, always now with his spiritual idea of what men could do, always now with that picture of the half-dead boy with his arm blown off running away from the enemy, set to work. This was two years ago, and Abbas had already got his diploma and his university place; and his

"You order for me, Mom. You know what I like."

family and the girl's family were getting ready for the wedding.

It was only now that it occurred to me to ask about his family: Abbas had always seemed so absolutely himself, so secure, so handsome and fine.

"My father worked for a bus company here in Tehran."

"What did he do?"

"He was a simple worker."

Mehrdad, with his feeling for the social grades of Iran, said, "A mechanic?"

And Mehrdad was right. He said later that the bus company for which Abbas's father had worked was a poor company, a very poor company; and to be a mechanic there was to have a poor kind of job. But the mechanic had educated all his children. One now ran a factory; another was a professor at the university; the youngest was an engineer. So Abbas's family was one of the success stories of the Revolution.

THE lights had come on again in the office. It was past eight, and we had been there since four-thirty. The publisher's assistant wanted to clear away the fruit plates and close the office. The children had long ago stopped playing in the street.

Abbas's bloodshot eyes were almost friendly now. He said, "I have said more than I should. I have talked like a drunk man." (That was Mehrdad's first translation when we were back at the hotel. But then right away he said, "No, that's too strong. It wouldn't be good for Abbas." He thought and said, " 'A drunken man doesn't know what he says, and I feel I have been like that.' That would be better." I didn't see the difference, but Mehrdad said, "The second one is softer.")

In the taxi Mehrdad said, "You noticed? He didn't mention Khomeini once."

I said, "When he was talking about Qum, he said there were many examples of religious learning not going with spirituality. I would like to ask him a little more about that."

But Mehrdad didn't think that was a good idea—he meant that it was an idea with some danger—and I didn't say any more about it.

On a wall in a side street we saw in very big letters the English words "FAITH NO MORE." Mehrdad said that it was an American hard-rock band. But the letterer knew English well, and his English, or Roman, letters were done in a way that no one knowing only the Persian script could manage. (Even Mehrdad wrote English script awkwardly.) In spite of what Mehrdad said, I thought the words were a kind of protest, like the playing of the popular music of the Shah's time, which you often heard coming out of flats and taxis.

Then, on a pier of a road bridge, there was a big daubed sign in Persian in red and green: "MARTYRS SAY" (in red) and "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE SINCE WE WENT AWAY?" (in green). That was critical, Mehrdad said. But Basijis have that privilege. They could daub what they wanted on the streets; no one stopped them.

IN the hotel room, with the big window giving a clear view of the spread of lights—blue and brilliant white and orange—of Evin prison, we reconstructed the evening. I asked Mehrdad whether Abbas and his brothers, the mechanic's sons, wouldn't have moved forward anyway, even if the Revolution hadn't come; and whether the Revolution hadn't really been wasteful of talent.

Mehrdad mentioned the firing squad when it has to shoot a thief (memories there of Mehrdad's recent military service): "The first shot is the important one. The others just follow. They hear the sound and they all pull the trigger. I have seen it many times. For example, in the swimming pool. In the military service I was a lifeguard. The little boys who came were all nervous, but the minute the first boy jumped in all the rest jumped in, not caring how deep the water was or whether they knew how to swim. And at the university nobody does anything about a professor who is teaching badly. But one day some student gets up and objects, and then there is chaos. Everybody starts objecting to the teacher. That is my feeling about the Revolution. My parents attended four or five demonstrations. But they didn't know why. They didn't know what they were doing. My father is not brave. He is not brave at all. Now when you ask him he says that he didn't go to the demonstrations. But I remember that he did. We had a lot of books in our house. There was a pictorial one, full of colors. It was published by the Shah. It was about the royal family. It was a prize to my sister from her school. My father—as I said, he was not a brave man—tore it up and put it in the dustbin. He said, 'Maybe when the

Revolution comes they don't want to see such things in my house.' I said, 'Nobody cares about your house.' He was just doing what everybody else did. He was innocent—and frightened. Others had a lot of sin, but he was innocent." Mehrdad thought of himself as iconoclastic, but his language could still be religious. "People are like ships," he said. (Abbas had used the ship metaphor, too, but in a different way, when he was talking about the goodbye ceremony on the battlefield.) "When the first ship goes in one direction, the others just follow."

IV—QUM: THE PUNISHER

When I went to Tehran in August, 1979, Khalkhali was a star. People were being killed all the time. There was nothing secretive or abashed about this killing. Some revolutionary official was keeping count, and regularly in the Tehran *Times* there was an update. In the beginning, the counting was to show how clement the Revolution was; later, when the killing became too much, the counting stopped. In those early days, photographs were taken of people before and after they were killed—naked on the sliding mortuary slab. These pictures were on sale in the streets.

Ayatollah Khalkhali, the ruler of the Revolutionary Court, was open to the press. He was giving many boastful interviews. I went with an interpreter to see him in Qum. It was Ramadan, the fasting month; and Qum was where the Ayatollah had temporarily retired to fast and pray. It was August, and very hot in the desert. When we got to Qum, we had to wait more than five hours, until the Ayatollah had finished his prayers. This was at eight in the evening. We found him then sitting on the floor of the veranda of his modest house with his guards, some Iranian admirers, and a respectful, formally dressed African couple (the man in a light-gray suit, the woman in a chiffon-like, sari-like garment) who were visiting.

The Ayatollah was white and bald and very short, a clerical gnome, messily attired. He liked, perhaps because of his small size, to clown. His jokes were about executions, and then the members of his court threw themselves about with laughter. He also liked—and this mannerism might have come with his hanging duties—abruptly to stop clowning and, for no reason, frown and grow severe.

He was from Azerbaijan, in the northwest. He said that he was the son of a farmer and as a boy had been a shepherd. Khalkhali would have been just the kind of village boy for whom, fifty years or so before, the theological schools offered the only way out: a room, food, and a little money. But Khalkhali had almost nothing to say about his early life. All he said, with a choking, wide-throated laugh, was that he knew how to cut off a sheep's head; and this was like another joke about executions, something for his little court. Perhaps because he had never learned how to process or meditate on his experience, never having read widely enough or thought hard enough, it had simply gone by, and much of it had even been lost to him. Perhaps the thirty-five years (as he said) of theological studies in Qum had rotted his mind, pushed reality far away, given him only rules, and now, with the Revolution, sunk him in righteousness and vanity. He was interested only in the present, his authority and reputation, and in his executioner's work.

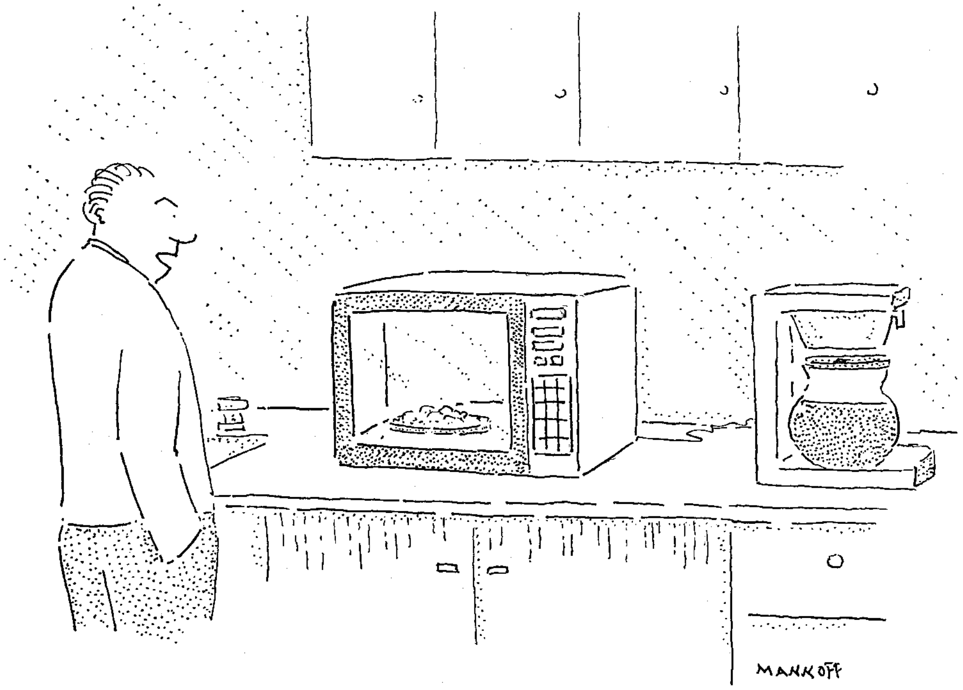
He said, "The mullahs are going to rule now. We are going to have ten thousand years of the Islamic republic. The Marxists are going to go on with their Lenin. We are going to go on in the way of Khomeini."

Revolution as blood and punishment, religion as blood and punishment: in Khalkhali's mind the two ideas seemed to have become one.

And, in fact, that double idea of blood fitted revolutionary Iran. Behzad, my interpreter then, was a Communist, and the son of a Communist. Behzad was twenty-four; with all his Iranian graces, his scientific education, and his social ambitions, he had his own dream of blood. His hero was Stalin. Behzad said, "What he did in Russia we have to do in Iran. We, too, have to do a lot of killing. A lot."

On the way back through the desert to Tehran, in moonlight, we turned on the car radio. The news was about the closing down by the government of the liberal, or nonreligious, paper *Ayandehgan*. The news caused Behzad's mood to grow dark. Whatever was said by the Communists at the top—however much for the next year or so they continued to claim the religious revolution as their own—Behzad knew that evening that the game was up.

Now, sixteen years later, I thought that I should go to Qum again, to look for Khalkhali and, if possible, get from him some new angle on old times. Mehrdad didn't think I should go. I had so far kept my nose clean; going to see



"No, I don't want to play chess. I just want you to reheat the lasagna."

Khalkhali would be too political a thing to do, and there might be trouble. And, indeed, when I asked around I was told that for various reasons Khalkhali might not want to be disturbed. He had been cast aside by the Revolution long ago as one of the old brigade, and was living in retirement; he had also recently had some sort of heart trouble.

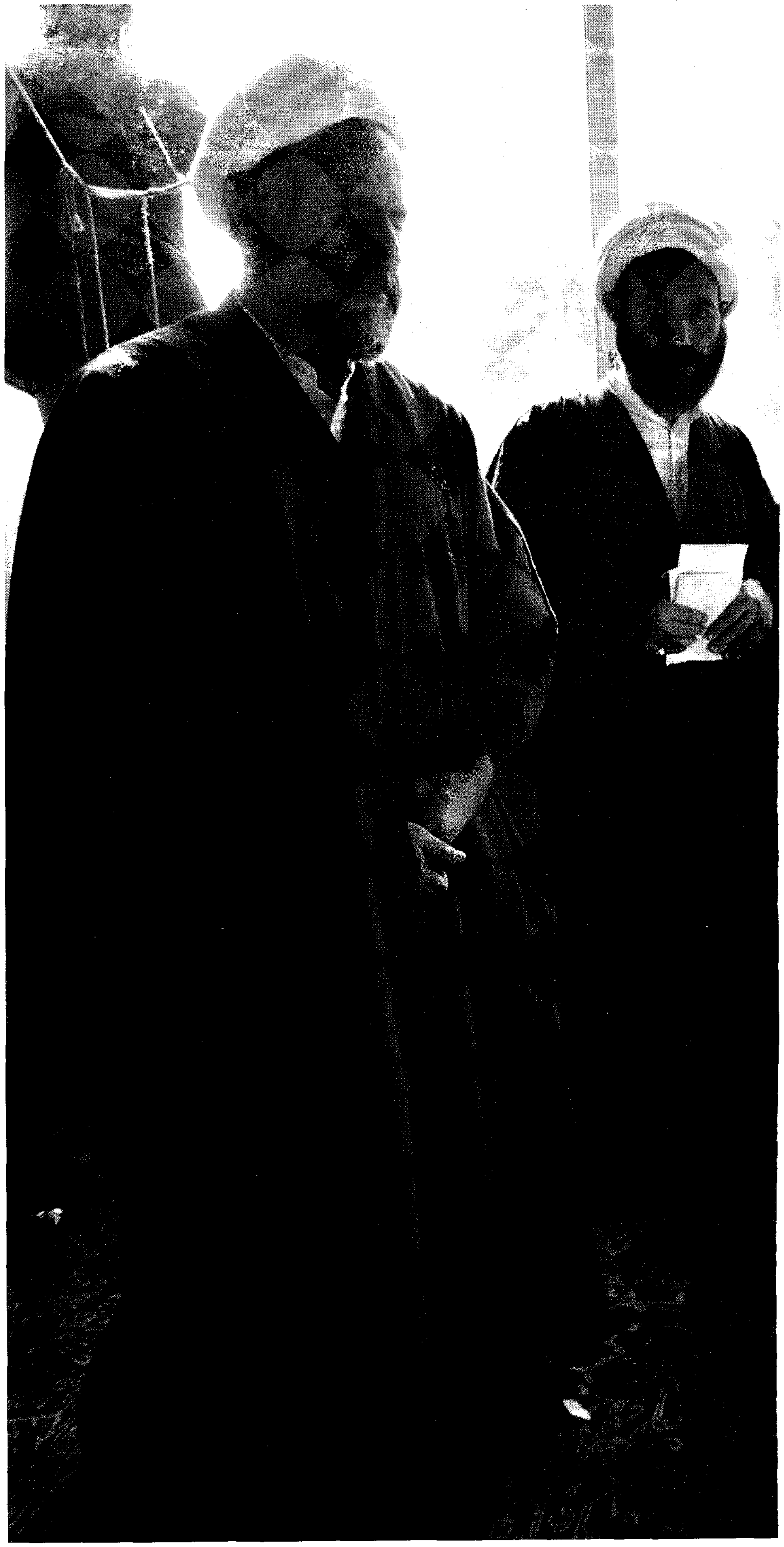
In spite of Mehrdad, I put out feelers. And the news that came back was good. Khalkhali was ready to see me in his house at eleven o'clock on a certain day. His house was on a little lane in Qum, and a theological student, a *talabeh*, would take me there. The *talabeh* had been studying in Qum for many years. I was to meet him at the Marashi Library; it wasn't far from where Khalkhali lived.

There was a new road to Qum. It went past the Khomeini shrine: the copper-colored dome, the decorated minarets. We were in desert, but where there was irrigation there were green fields. The land was flat. Then we came to true desert, and the land, red-brown and bare, was more broken: now a series of mud knolls, now a line of low cliffs worn down in places to rock, the rock showing in twisted, cracked layers. It was wonderful, from the car. But Mehrdad said, "We think it is very bad land. It is salt land."

Sheds, like factory sheds, along a local road to the right announced the nearness of Qum; and soon the dome and minarets of the famous shrine of Qum began to show above a nondescript spread of dust-colored brick houses. In 1979, Qum had been a small town; now, after the Revolution, it was more than three times its former size and had a population of nearly a million.

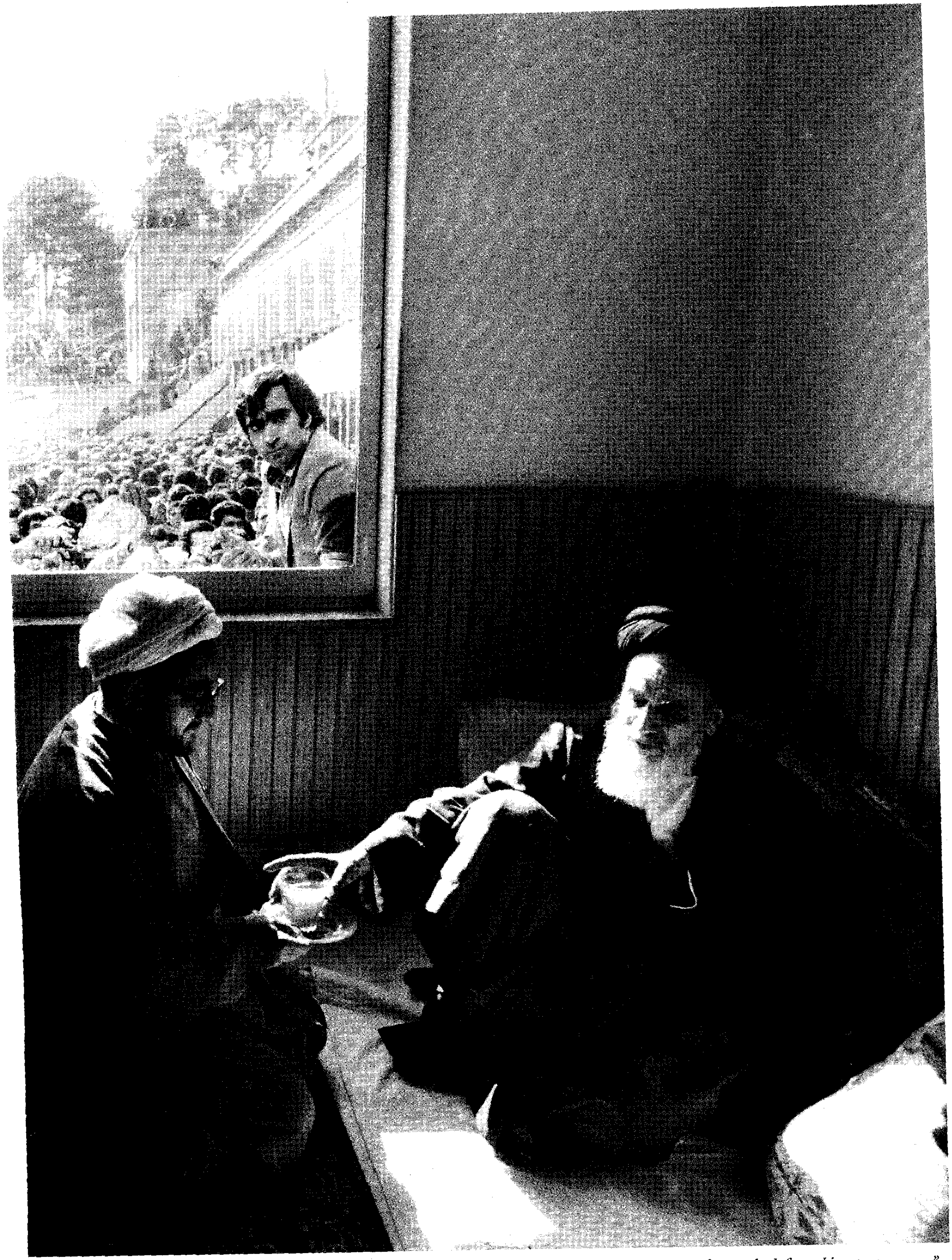
Kamran, our driver, said in his ironical way, "We are entering the Vatican."

At the side of the road, there was a big sign that looked like a municipal welcome board. Mehrdad gave this translation of what was written in the bold, flowing Persian script: "The whole practical philosophy of the law is governing." The word used for "the law" was *fiqh;* it meant "jurisprudence" in a very wide way, and was one of the principal subjects studied in Qum. As with so many things in Persian, Mehrdad said, the statement on the sign was ambiguous. The politer meaning was "Our rule is based on study



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURNETT/CONTACT PRESS IMAGES

Khomeini being served tea by Ayatollah Khalkhali, his famous "hanging judg



omeini once told the mullahs, "Find the first man who is rich or who has a factory or a huge farm. And force him to pay you."

and religion." The real meaning was more brutal: "We at Qum are here to rule you."

Not long after the Revolution, the people of Iran had voted in a referendum for an Islamic republic. This was in 1979. The principles of the Islamic republic hadn't yet been worked out, and most people thought that they were simply voting for freedom and justice. The principles of the Islamic republic had been worked out now by the scholars, and this rule by Qum was one of the principles. It was an aspect of the fundamental idea of the Islamic state, the idea of the Leader and obedience to the Leader, which was now never to be questioned, even indirectly.

A later sign, in three languages, was softer. It was about the shrine of the much loved woman saint Fatimah al-Masumah, "the innocent," the sister of the eighth Imam.

And now, after the desert, and in the holy city, the women in black chadors in the streets made an extra impression. They were brisk, solitary-seeming, noticeably small. Some of them held their chadors over their faces with their hands or bit an end between their teeth; they looked like people who were muzzling themselves. You didn't think of the woman saint of Qum; you thought of the principle of obedience.

Without the dull gold of the dome of the shrine, the town would have been quite ordinary; but always there was the dome. And now, further into the town, we began seeing the students, with their turbans and black robes and variously colored tunics. It was as though we had switched centuries. As though, by some cinematic or computer device, we had been taken deep into a play by Marlowe, say, had begun to walk old streets, live with old assumptions, and had gone back to an old idea of learning, with all its superseded emblems of color and dress. (Superseded but oddly familiar: fragments of that academic idea, originally imported from the Islamic world, had survived in the Oxford I had entered, just like that, one afternoon in 1950, and was soon taking for granted: the long black gowns of lecturers and scholar students, the shorter gowns of commoners, ordinary students.)

The Marashi Library was not well known. Different people had different pieces of information. We began, almost, to be led on corner by corner. We had sped through the desert on the new road; we were losing time now; we were going to be late for Khalkhali.

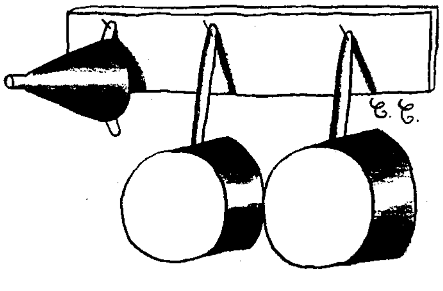
At last, we came to the library and left Kamran in the car and went inside to look for the *talabeh* who was going to take us to Khalkhali. His name was Emami. It was now past eleven, and eleven was the time Khalkhali had given.

Back outside, on the busy sunlit street, we passed an open-fronted bookstall or shop: Persian books in a glass case, two very young students in turbans and tunics and gowns excitedly buying what appeared to be a concise textbook from the stallkeeper and looking like people who had found treasure. The scene was like a stage set, with props (new books of antique learning, a shop of such books) that had ceased to be props, and with costumed actors (bookseller, students) who had become their roles. It would have been nice to stop and look, but we were already an hour late for Khalkhali.

At last, we came to a short residential street: white houses, newish, the houses with high fences or walls in the Iranian way. Emami pressed a bell, and after a while a man opened the gate. He was not in uniform, but Mehrdad observed—and told me later—that the man had a gun at his waist, below his shirt. We went through the gate and found another guard. He was in dark-green trousers and shirt, the old-style uniform of the Revolutionary Guards.

A small front courtyard, a short flight of steps, a veranda: I remembered something like that from 1979, but I couldn't be sure that it was the same house, because the surroundings seemed to have changed so much. In 1979, Khalkhali's house had been at the edge of town, on a new street with young trees; the desert felt close. This lane looked established and was deep within the town.

We took off our shoes and went into the reception area. To the right was a library packed with books in sets. To the left was a sitting room, a formal, almost empty area spread with carpets. Hanging on the wall was a ready-wrapped black turban, looking somewhat thin and squashed and pathetic; above that were photographs of the Ayatollah with Khomeini. The photographs were high up on the wall—perhaps to prevent them from being pilfered—and it wasn't easy to see the details. One photograph was a candid-camera black-and-white shot of Khalkhali and Khomeini, both in turbans and robes, both frowning, walking purposefully in snow. Khalkhali's robe came down almost to his ankles, outlined his belly, and didn't stress his shortness; in fact, striding beside Khomeini, he didn't look much shorter. A formal group portrait to the left of that was of Khomeini, his son, and Khalkhali; Khalkhali had been the teacher of Khomeini's son and was proud of the distinction. Next to that was a color photograph of Khomeini and Khalkhali, both men laughing this time: Khomeini on the right, reclining on what looked like a chaise longue, Khalkhali leaning conspiratorially over him from the left. Khalkhali's black gown—like a protective wing over Khomeini—occupied much of the left side of the photograph. It was a disturbing photograph: Khalkhali the jester making his master laugh. It was the only photograph I had seen in which Khomeini was laughing, and the laugh altered the face, stressed the sensuality.



Khalkhali was now out of everything, people said. The photographs on the wall were proof of his power in the old days, his closeness to the Imam, the leader of the Revolution. But in a time to come the photographs on the wall might say something else: the busy men of the Revolution frowning on the street, laughing in private.

He came in now. He was barefoot, in simple white, like a penitent, and he moved very slowly. A short-sleeved white tunic, wet with perspiration, hung over a loose lower garment. Step by dragging step, he came in, very small, completely bald, baby-faced without his turban, head held down against his chest, eyes without mischief now and seeming close to tears, looking up from below

PERSONNEL
DIRECTOR

"And my approval rating is sixty-two."

his forehead, as though he wished to dramatize his situation and needed pity.

He invited me to sit in a chair. He sat next to me. We were separated by a little side table with a lace doily and toothpicks on it.

I didn't know how to start. I really wanted to hear about his work as a judge, and to hear what he had to say now about the Revolution. But I didn't know how to get to that. I thought an indirect approach, with questions about his childhood or his early days, would begin to take us there. But, as in 1979, he didn't want to talk about his life.

If we were to go back so far, he said, it would tire him. He had had a heart operation, a triple bypass. And, either because it was hard for him to sit on the chair or because he wished to show he didn't like my questions, he got up and moved to a palliasse on the carpet.

I asked when he had become a revolutionary.

He said he had always been a revolutionary, ever since he knew himself; he had always hated kings.

Guards brought in tea in little glasses. They sat and listened to our talk. I felt they liked the break in their routine.

And social graces came to Khalkhali. He said he had learned a lot from Nehru. This was meant as a courtesy to me: he saw me as someone from India. He had especially liked Nehru's book "Glimpses of World History"; in the Persian translation it was in three volumes. I reminded him of his interest in the Polisario movement in 1979, and asked what he thought would be the future of societies that were revolutionary today. He said, in Mehrdad's translation, "Reality will always prevail."

Reality: for him it meant truth. It was to be set against false systems, false gods, fraudulence. It was hard, though, to get him to talk concretely; he turned everything into abstraction. As an ayatollah, he had that talent. It pleased him to be baffling my purpose, and, as he talked in his ayatollah's way about reality and fraudulence, his eyes—seemingly so close to tears when he entered—brightened, began to twinkle: a glimpse there of old mischievousness, with something of the man of 1979 showing through.

He said to me, "Are you going to see Ayatollah Montazeri?"

I said, "I don't think so."

When Mehrdad translated this, Khalkhali looked at him and said, "He should see Montazeri."

Mehrdad set his face and did the translation. And it was only later that, putting together various things I heard, I understood that this question about Ayatollah Montazeri was a political question, and possibly even an attempt by Khalkhali to involve me in his cause. Khalkhali and Montazeri had both been important in the early days of the Revolution (Montazeri at one time had been Khomeini's second-in-command); and both men had made themselves known for their virulence. If Khalkhali was the hanging judge, Montazeri, as Khomeini's second-in-command, had sometimes been even more zealous than his master. When Khomeini said that the Revolution should concentrate on the young, that people over forty were useless, Montazeri had gone one stage further. Pensions were useless, he had said; dead trees should be cut down. People still remembered that. Both those men, Khalkhali and Montazeri, had been cast aside by a later generation of people in power; both were now kept quiet and harmless.

Sitting on the palliasse on the carpet, Khalkali had been looking up at me from below his forehead, and I became aware now of his counter-probing. How old was I? Did I have children? I said no. He asked why. I said if I had had children it would have been hard for me to do my work. He said many Persian writers had had a hundred children and written a hundred books. How many books had I written? Did I make a living? It was hard for a writer in Persian to make a living. Was I connected with some agency? What was my religion? He asked about India and Kashmir, and paid no attention to what I said.

He had become unhappy about me. He had been used to another kind of interview, something more political and immediate (and perhaps offering more immediate publicity). He didn't know what I was after.

It might have been better if I had asked him directly about his reputation as the hanging judge of the Revolution. But I didn't want to do that; I thought a question like that would make him close up or give a set answer or grow hostile, and would achieve only the obvious. I could have asked him about the photographs on the wall. The photographs interested me, and they were important to him; he might have wanted to talk about them, and that might have led to other things. But that idea about the photographs came to me only many weeks later, when I was considering my notes.

I went on in my groping way. I asked how he assessed the Revolution now. He talked for some time, clearly using a lot of meaningless words, and Mehrdad's short translation of what he said was that a beginning had been made. How much of a beginning? Thirty per cent. I saw an opening; and he must have seen what was going to come. Because, before I could ask about the seventy per cent that still had to be done, he said he was tired. The eyes that twinkled while he talked or lectured became dead, the expression melancholy, empty. He dropped his head, pressed his chin against his chest, stood up slowly, the sweat showing on the front and back of his short-sleeved white tunic. Step by step, he moved toward a side room.

The interview was over. And now we had a problem. We had no car. It wouldn't start. Kamran had gone off to find a garage. He had said he would be back in half an hour, but that wasn't meant literally. We could only wait for him. It was the middle of the day, and it was too hot to wait in the lane outside. So Emami, Mehrdad, and I sat in Khalkhali's reception room with his guards.

We sat for about half an hour or forty-five minutes, below the Ayatollah's turban and photographs, waiting for Kamran, listening for the sound of a stopping car, and going out from time to time to check. And then Khalkhali came in again, slow, sad, his loose top tunic wet down the middle. Mehrdad explained about the driver and the car. Khalkhali asked whether we wanted some bread and cheese, Persian bread, Persian cheese.

This seemed to me a good idea; it might give me a chance to talk in another way to the Ayatollah. But Mehrdad said with some firmness that the offer of bread and cheese was just a form of words, a courtesy, that the Ayatollah was asking us to leave.

We stood up to say goodbye. If we wanted to see him again, Khalkhali said, we would have to make an appointment. It would have to be next week, on Thursday; that was the day he wasn't teaching. And this time we were to keep to the hour. His melancholy face began to alter with irritation. And we were to make notes. Nobody could remember everything. Talk without notes was a waste of time. We had been playing with him. I said that I made notes, but not right away; I hadn't felt that our earlier conversation had got to the note-taking stage. Next week, he said, his irritation beginning to melt; and we were to telephone beforehand. He gave the number and pointed to one of the guards: he would answer the telephone.

I began to feel that if we hadn't been so delayed, and if things had gone better, he really wouldn't have minded talking. But the moment had passed. We went out to the veranda, put on our shoes, and crossed the street to a little strip of shade near the corner, and we stood there, waiting for Kamran.

Mehrdad said, "Did you see the gun?"

Emami said, "He has many enemies now."

Mehrdad said, "They are like enemies to each other. The old timers and the new people." Then Mehrdad said to me, "He asked you about Montazeri. I hope you are not going to try to see him. That is the way of death."

He spoke with genuine dread. I did what I could to calm him down.

I said, "But these men are back numbers. They are very old, and they can't be dangerous to anybody now."

He said, "In this situation, even the dead are dangerous."

And, standing there, opposite Khalkhali's house, I thought that even if I did come next Thursday—and if everybody remembered, and there was a meeting—there would perhaps be little to add to what I had seen that early afternoon: the justicer of the Revolution, old and ill and anxious, subjected himself now to various controls, sitting below his photographs, which were more sinister and condemning than he knew, and with guards with guns, one of the guards wearing the old dark-green uniform of the early *komiteh* and making it look like old clothes.

There had been guards in 1979. I could still remember the desert sunset all around us at the end of the long August day and the heavily built man with a gun at the low front gate of the exposed house in the half-made lane; and the

A GUST

My bird, oh my beloved,
I live in the fleeting shadow of your wings.
If you have followed me to this quiet place
you can find me anywhere,
I never need to fear that vacancy.

Late afternoon. Low light whose clarity
spreads you like sunset on the long lagoon,
hovering closer at this amber hour . . .

What do I call a loss as dear as yours,
never to turn at my imploring voice,
luminous, fugitive, embracing silence?
Your presence is a grateful gust of grief,
a wingbrush and an echo—oh, an absence.

—Rachel Hadas

heavy frisking hands of that man; and his closed, foolish, exalted face. The Revolution still belonged to the country as a whole, and all that business of guards and searching had been principally for the drama: the pretend idea of the Revolution in danger, part of the excitement and celebration of the early days of the Revolution. Now Khalkhali—though it was part of his restraint—needed the man with the gun.

Mehrdad said, unexpectedly, "It was very nice of him to say that he was tired. Iranians don't do that. They don't say things so openly. He is very old. But very clever."

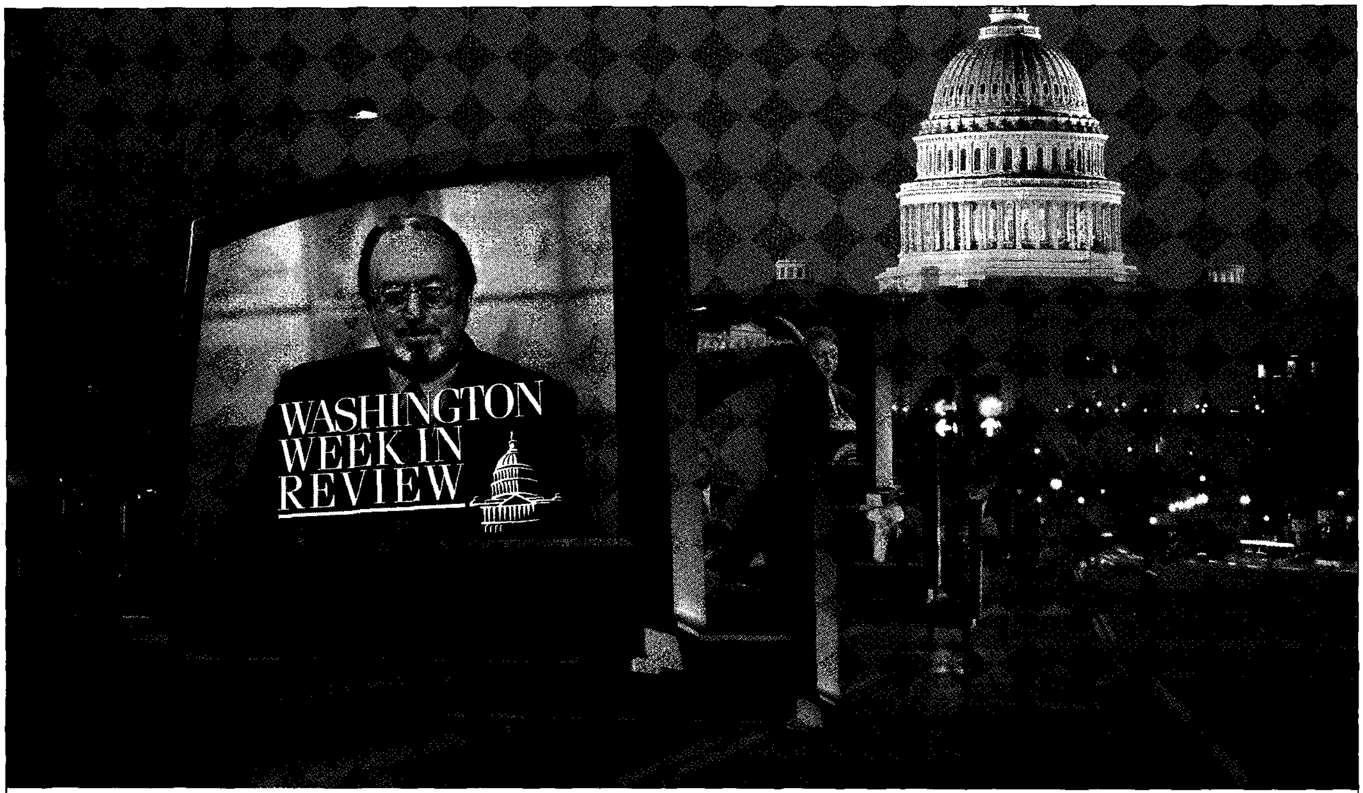
V—CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION

THERE were rules: everything was controlled. It wasn't only the chador and headdress for women; or boys and girls not walking together; or women not singing on the radio and television; or certain kinds of music not being played. There was exhaustive censorship, of magazines, newspapers, books, television. And helicopters flew over northern Tehran looking for satellite dishes, just as the Guards walked in the park to watch the boys and girls, or entered houses to look for alcohol and opium, or, as I was to see in far-off Shiraz, the local morals police made the rounds even of the tourist hotels to make their presence felt.

In 1979 and 1980, the missionaries of the Islamic revival had endlessly said that Islam was a complete way of life; and in Iran now it was possible to see political Islam as a complete form of control. Mr. Parviz, the executive editor of the Tehran *Times*, had said to me not long after I arrived, "They want to control your way of sitting, here, and your way of talking." I don't think I had understood what he was saying. It took time to understand how far the restrictions reached, though it was easy enough to state what they were; and it took time to understand how they were deforming people's lives.

Mehrdad's sister stayed at home when she came back from work: silent, full of inward rage, her unhappiness a shadow over the house and a source of worry for her parents, who couldn't figure out a future for her. It was too difficult for her to go out; and now she had lost the will. In this, she was like the fifteen-year-old daughter of a teacher I had got to know. This girl had already learned that she could be stopped by the Guards and questioned if she was alone on the street. She hated the humiliation, and now she didn't like to go out. The world had narrowed for her just when it should have opened up.

In February, 1980, I had seen young women in guerrilla garb among the students camped outside the seized United States Embassy: Che Guevara gear, the theatre of revolution. I remembered one plump young woman, in her khakis, coming out of a low tent on this freezing afternoon with a mug of steaming tea for one of the men: her face bright with the idea of serving the Revolution and the warriors of the Revolution. Most of those young people, "Muslim students following the line of Ayatollah Khomeini," would now be dead or neutered, like all the other Communist and left-wing groups. I don't think that the young woman with the mug could have dreamed



After us, it's all old news. Every Friday night on PBS, *Washington Week in Review* leads the weekend news programs. Join commentator Ken Bode and Washington's most savvy reporters for up-to-the-minute insights on the most vital issues of our day. Seven days in 30 minutes.

SEE IT ON PBS

A Production of WETA WASHINGTON, D.C.

Funded by Ford Motor Company

that the Revolution to which she was contributing—posters on the Embassy wall and on trees were comparing the Iranian Revolution with the Nicaraguan, making both appear part of a universal movement forward—would end in this way, with an old-fashioned tormenting of women, and with the helicopters in the sky looking for satellite dishes.

The very gear and style of revolution now had another meaning. The beards were not Che Guevara beards but good Islamic beards, not cut by razors; and the green guerrilla outfits were now the uniform of the enforcers of the religious law.

No one I met spoke of any kind of revolution as a possibility. That idea, so loved by Iranians of an earlier generation, had been spoiled now. No one ever spoke of the possibility of political action. There were no means, and no leaders in sight. No new ideas could be floated. The apparatus of control was complete. The actual rulers, though their photographs appeared everywhere, were far away; government here, someone said, was "occult." And still, in the general inanition, there was a feeling that something was about to happen. It made people nervous.

MEHRDAD had a friend called Fereydun, who was in his early twenties, like Mehrdad, and was doing his military service in the Air Force. Fereydun was tall and slender and sharp-faced. His English (like Mehrdad's, acquired in Iran) was fluent, once he got going, and was capable of great complexity. Fereydun, having grown up in the isolation of revolutionary Iran, was hungry for books, ideas, philosophical discussion.

Fereydun was going to be home on leave that afternoon, and Mehrdad and I went to his family's flat. The flat, on a city street, was small and dark and full of traffic noise. There were two dining tables in the small sitting room. The longer one was prepared for us. It had chocolates in a glass dish, fruit in a larger dish, and tea in small, gilt-decorated glasses with handles.

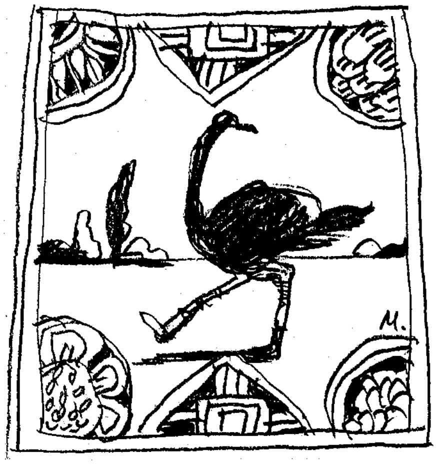
Fereydun's mother was in the kitchen. She called Mehrdad, and they talked for a while. When Mehrdad came back, he was distressed. He said, "I've been hearing miseries. Sometimes I think I can't bear any more."

Fereydun's mother worked as a pharmacist in a hospital. A gardener had a son who had gone to the war. The boy hadn't returned, but the gardener never believed that his son was dead. He always said that his son was going to come home again. The gardener was a devout, bearded man, so bearded and devout that people at the hospital thought he might be an ideological spy, keeping an eye on the staff. The war at last ended. Prisoners began to return. Lists of returning prisoners were printed, and the gardener always came to ask Fereydun's mother whether his son's name was among them. The name never was.

About three months before, there had been a mass funeral for three thousand unknown martyrs whose remains had been recovered from old battlefields. The Air Force had flown the boxes to the martyrs' cemetery. Each box was covered with an Iranian flag. The boxes were stacked up in pyramids. Mehrdad had seen the ceremony on television and had been overwhelmed.

One of the boxes contained the remains—"two bones," Mehrdad said—of the gardener's son. Up to that moment, the gardener had been fortified by his faith. Then he began to grieve. Just a week or two ago, he had died. There had been an autopsy at the hospital; it showed that the gardener's stomach had been eaten up by cancer. That was what Fereydun's mother had wanted to talk to Mehrdad about. That was what had sent Mehrdad out to me saying, "I've been hearing miseries."

When, many days before (which now seemed to me like many weeks before), I had asked Mehrdad what he felt about the war, he had said, "I feel nothing about it." He hadn't meant that. What he had meant was what he had just said: "Sometimes I feel I can't bear any more."



THERE were rules and more rules. But young people, those who had known nothing except the religious state, were learning their own ways of disobedience. They had their bodies; their bodies were their own. There were stories of a sexual revolution among the young, and there were other forms of disobedience.

Fereydun's brother was nineteen. He was just five or six years younger than Fereydun, but he belonged to a different generation. Only a wall, Fereydun said, separated him from his brother. But while there were serious books on Fereydun's side, on his brother's side there were photographs of soccer teams and a heavy-metal pop group, and a swastika. Fereydun's brother was a Nazi. He said that, as an Iranian, he was Aryan; therefore he was a Nazi. And he took being a Nazi seriously.

Sitting at the long table in the main room of the flat, Fereydun told me that his brother and his friends had driven out the Jewish family who used to live next door. They had slashed the tires of the family's car and broken its windows. The family had not only left Tehran; they had left the country.

Iran was not Europe or the United States. Iran had its own stresses, and the story Fereydun was telling, with his own strange innocence, wasn't just about young Iranian Nazis. His story was more about the difference now between the generations, the difference that five or six years had made. There was another aspect of this difference: Fereydun's Nazi brother and his friends were not frightened. Their principal sport now was to go out and taunt the Guards, challenging them to arrest them. There were consequences: Fereydun's brother would often spend a day or so in jail.

The brother had been in the sitting room when Mehrdad and I arrived. He was sallow and very thin. I didn't know anything about him then, and hadn't thought about his black clothes. He had been polite but withdrawn, and I had seen him as someone else deprived and poor and lost, without an idea of a future, and more desperate than his brother or Mehrdad. Now that I had heard about him I wanted to talk to him. But—and this, as Fereydun said, was another sign of cultural change, a break with the past—the boy had gone out without telling anyone.

The Revolution had bred strange children.

MEHRDAD took me to a new part of Tehran, which was booming. It was like another city. It served the new rich, the people who had done well out of the Revolution. It was in the northeast of Tehran, and was about ten years old. There was a new commercial center, with expensive shops, which served new condominiums going up on one side. The people who lived there were traders and people cutting deals, Mehrdad said, and their daughters moved with an ease and an allure that were immediately noticeable: high heels, slender legs in stone-washed jeans, stylish short chadors. "And the skin," Mehrdad said, with his own sensitivity to the beauty of young girls. The good skin that came with good air and good food and an idea of the future: the skin his sister didn't have.

Another kind of person, another kind of disobedience. In a high, well-lighted watch post at the entrance to the commercial center, a young girl stood blank and unabashed before the Guard. "He's got her," Mehrdad said. Some un-Islamic behavior; something against the rules, something, perhaps, about showing too much of her hair. Mehrdad said, "He'll talk to her and let her go."

We went to a coffee shop, and Mehrdad showed me a girl in the reflection in the glass. He said, "She's drugged." The girl's eyes were blurred, unfocussed; her scarf had fallen very low on the back of her head. In one corner, a khaki-clad Guard was talking to the proprietor. It was the waiter who came to the girl and told her to watch her chador. She merely touched the top of her head; and after a while the Guard, perhaps not wishing to make a scene, went away. A little later, when the girl staggered out, I saw that her long chestnut hair was hanging out of her scarf at the back. It was a fashion, Mehrdad had told me some days before, and also a display of disobedience.

Later, on the road outside the commercial center, we saw a group of young people who had just been searched by the motorcycle Guards—for videos, compact disks, drugs, or other forbidden things.

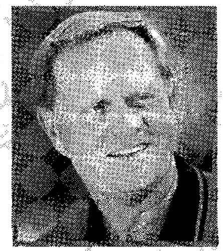
VI—NIHILISM

ISFAHAN, a famous city with a romantic name, was receiving foreign tourists once again. I had no idea what to expect. Such ideas as I had of its glory had come indirectly, through Indian painting. From certain overwrought imperial Mughal pictures, I knew that the India of Emperor Jahangir and the Persia of Shah Abbas were the central powers of the globe at the beginning of the seventeenth century; no other country really mattered. Britain (even after Queen Elizabeth, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and Shakespeare) was far away, on the margin; the ambassador sent by King James in 1615 had a hard time getting attention from Jahangir.

A Hindu artist of Jahangir's court spent six years in Isfahan doing portraits of Shah Abbas, so that the Indian Emperor could understand and be at ease with his great rival. It was those portraits, of a sometimes deliberately shrunken, short-legged Shah Abbas (with a curved sword almost too big for him), rather than any concrete idea of his great city, which I carried in my head. So, such is the power of caricature, I was not ready for the splendor and extent and cosmopolitanism of Isfahan, its breathtaking confidence and inventiveness and, always, the rightness of its proportions: the immense main square (bigger than St. Mark's in Venice), the bridges, the domes of both mosques and churches, the delicately colored tiles in whose pattern and effects one could lose oneself.

Such glory here; a kindred glory in India. Yet in less than a hundred years after Jahangir the Mughal glory was over in India, and a hundred years after that India was a British colony. Iran never formally became a colony. Its fate was in some ways worse. When Europe, once so far away, made its presence felt, Iran dropped off the map. Its great monuments fell into decay. And by the end of the nineteenth century its rulers were ready to hand over the country, and its people, to foreign concessionaires.

India, almost as soon as it became a British colony, began to be regenerated, began to receive the new learning of Europe, to get the institutions that went with that learning. Iran was to enter the twentieth century only with an idea of Eastern kinship and the antiquated theological learning of places



THE ARTISTRY OF NICKLAUS COMES TO SANTA FE.

This remarkable community comes complete with all the amenities your lifestyle demands including a Jack Nicklaus designed golf course. Homesites start from $200,000. For more information please call:

1-800-237-0088, Department NY526

LAS CAMPANAS SANTA FE

Obtain the Property Report required by Federal law and read it before signing anything. No Federal agency has judged the merits or value, if any, of this property. Warning: the California Department of Real Estate has not inspected, examined or qualified this offering.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Adopt Me.

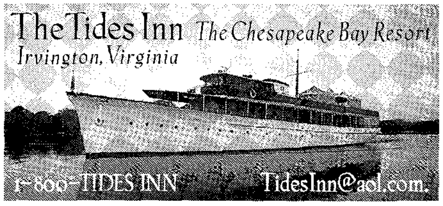
I'm a smart, charming, rare Gloustershire Old Spots Pig. Adopt me for $25 and help fund the efforts of this educational foundation to preserve endangered livestock like me. You'll receive my photo, adoption certificate, and newsletter. Please call or write for information about my other farm friends available for adoption.

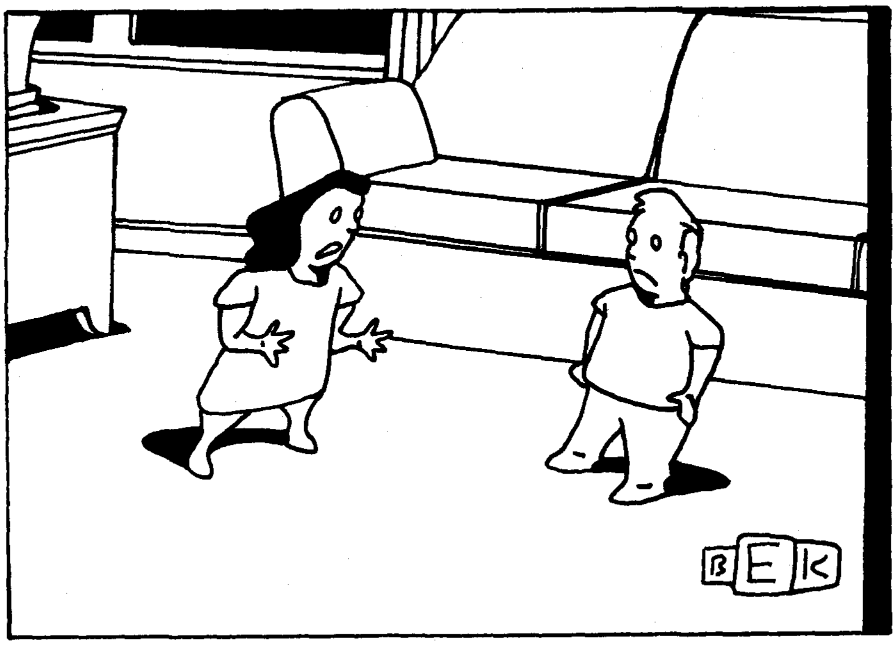
Love, Matilda

KELMSCOTT RARE BREEDS FOUNDATION
RR2 Box 365, N97
Lincolnville, Me
04849-9626
(207) 763-4088

CRUISE THE COAST OF MAINE!
Cruise comfortably aboard the 83-ft. mini cruise vessel PAULINE (12 passengers). Or sail into an adventure aboard the distinguished Maine windjammer Schooner STEPHEN TABER (22 passengers).
Fun itineraries! • 2-, 3-, & 6-day cruises
Brochures : 1-800-999-7352
P.O.Box 1050, Rockland, ME 04841

Merwydden House
World Class in Wales
For a free brochure on the rental of our very special, new, 3BR luxury country house in the beautiful Wye Valley, please write: Sir Alan Cox, P.O. Box 27, Chepstow, Monmouthshire NP6 6EY, United Kingdom.
FAX—011-44-1291-628436





"It's not a reflection on you. I just want to spend more time with my dolls."

• •

like Qum. Iran was to enter the twentieth century only with a capacity for pain and nihilism.

MY host in Isfahan was a retired diplomat. In the nineteen-eighties, after the Revolution, and after he retired from the foreign service, he had stopped travelling abroad: in the wider world the humiliations of having an Iranian passport were too great. He lived on the remnant of a private income. Revolution and war had damaged him and exhausted his country; the old diplomat knew that. But he was a divided man still: he saw both the Revolution and the war as necessary, and his stories of pain were ambiguous.

He had a friend, a teacher. When the Revolution came, the teacher was in his late thirties, and his son was eleven. The boy's name was Farhad: it was an old Iranian name, rather than an Arab or Islamic one—the kind of name that middle-class people had been giving their children since the time of the reforms of the Shah's father.

After the Revolution, the teacher began to feel that his son was drifting away from him. In the second year of the war, when the boy was fourteen, he finally rejected his family and their ways. He discarded the name Farhad and gave himself the Arab name Maissam. Maissam was one of the early followers of the Prophet; he died a martyr.

Khomeini had said that the Revolution had to concentrate on children and the younger generation, and much energy had gone into indoctrinating the young. With the war, the needs of the Revolution were great.

The old diplomat said, "Young boys like to play with guns. So they would take them to the mosques and show them the Israeli Uzi submachine guns and other guns. These boys were fascinated, and at the same time they chanted slogans and prayers while someone related the story of the martyrs of Kerbala." The unequal battle of Kerbala, where the Prophet's grandson and his followers were massacred by Iraqis; the Shia tragedy and passion, unendingly rehearsed.

Then one day the teacher's son, without telling his parents anything, went to the mosque and volunteered, and was sent to the front.

"From what I heard later, he became the commander of a small group that defused land mines. He was a Basiji. In the beginning no one knew how to defuse the land mines and hundreds of Basijis were sent to defuse them. They had special shows for them before they joined and each one was given a key to wear around his neck, which was a key to Paradise."

After some time, the teacher heard that his son had been wounded and was in the hospital in Tabriz. He went there and brought him home and nursed him. When the boy was well enough he went back to the front. This happened many times.

"After six years he finally returned home. The war was over. He was quite depressed. His parents didn't know what to do with him. He spent most of the time in his room. He didn't want to see other people. At last, one day, the teacher went into the room. He saw the boy sitting cross-legged in the center of the room, and the carpet was spread with photographs, group photographs and also single portraits. The boy just told his father, 'All these people are dead.' They had been his friends at the front."

The war was receding; things were cooling down; there was less of the old frenzy or zeal. Slowly, yielding to his parents' love, the boy recovered. He changed his haircut; he began to wear European or international clothes again. He joined a university. The Basijis were privileged; they could get into universities even if they didn't pass the entrance examination. Piece by piece, then, the personality that he had discarded six or seven years before as a boy was restored to him as a young man. He went back to listening to pop music. He dropped his Arab name and became Farhad once more.

The diplomat said, "He thinks now he'll be a doctor. It's all been a dream. He doesn't talk about the war."

A split personality for Maissam-Farhad, and a split personality for the old diplomat as well, because to be Iranian was to have a special faith, a special version of the Arab faith; and the old diplomat knew in his bones—and it was part of his pain—that, draining and inconclusive and terrible as the war had been, it had had to be fought.

He said, "If those boys hadn't made those sacrifices, Saddam and the Iraqis would have eaten up a quarter of Iran. One of the names Saddam had given himself was Victor of Kadisiya." The Battle of Kadisiya took place in 637 A.D.; it was a battle in which the Iranians had been defeated at the hands of the Arabs in the very early days of Islam. Saddam called Iranians Magi and Zoroastrians—worshippers at the fire temple, adherents of Iran's pre-Islamic religion.

The old diplomat was a wise and cultivated man; yet the Iraqi taunts—which were like taunts in a schoolyard—still had the power to wound him. Persia had a long history: for close on twelve hundred years before the Battle of Kadisiya, it had been a power; it had challenged Greece and wounded Rome. But that past was dead: it might have belonged to another people; it didn't make up for the defeat at Kadisiya. The Iran in people's consciousness began with that defeat.

I HEARD stories like that of the teacher's son while I walked and drove about Isfahan, while I considered domes and tiles, arches and vaulting, and, at night, the lights of the arcaded bridges over the river. In some unsettling way a great pain, physical and mental, lay below the civility of the old diplomat. Pain was really the subject of his stories; and sometimes a story, though presented as the experience of someone he knew, had a quality of folk myth, something fabricated out of the general need, just as, at certain times in communities, jokes appear and make the rounds, made up by no one but contributed to by everyone. Such a story was the story about the "piece of meat."

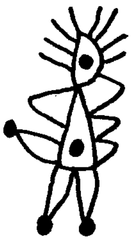
An eye specialist was asked by a middle-aged woman in a chador to examine the eyesight of a patient, a young man, who was in the local hospital. The patient, a boy, was just "a piece of meat," mutilated beyond rehabilitation, without hands, without feet. But every day the woman in the chador came, and she took the eye specialist to see this patient. The specialist wondered whether there was any point in restoring the sight of a person who would never get well again or return to any sort of life. But he didn't want to wound the woman in the chador. She was always in the hospital ward. There were two or three like her.

The specialist made inquiries. He found out that the woman in the chador was not the boy's mother; she was only a neighbor. The boy's mother also came to the hospital every day, but she didn't stay long. After some time, the specialist won the confidence of the woman in the chador, and he asked why she wanted the mutilated boy, who was not her son, to see again.

The woman in the chador said, "My own boy, my own son, was executed because he belonged to an anti-revolutionary group. The person who reported him was this boy here, this neighbor's son. I am happy that my own son is dead. He was executed, and that was all. I want to keep this piece of meat alive to take revenge. I want his mother to grieve for him every day."

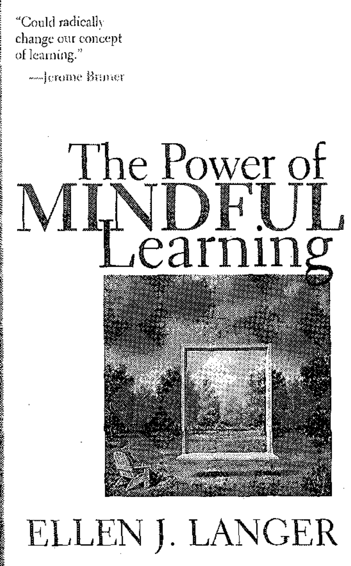
THE Shah had proclaimed the pre-Islamic past, partly in order to link himself to the great rulers of that past. Like Alexander, more than two thousand years before, he had made a ceremonial pilgrimage to the tomb of Cyrus, at Pasargadae. After the Revolution, gangs of revolutionaries had gone to the tomb and the palaces nearby, but they had done little damage. It was also said that Ayatollah Khalkhali, Khomeini's hanging judge, had been appointed to a committee to work out the best means of destroying the ruins of Persepolis. But then there had been the war, the long Sacred Defense, and the revolutionary moment had passed. The Revolution had taken hold; there were no more enemies; the world had been remade.

Where once Mehrdad's father had photographs of the royal family on his wall, he now had a silhouette of Khomeini. The country had been turned inside out, eviscerated, by war and revolution. Some people had come up; very many more had been destroyed; and no one could say for sure that a larger cause had been served. All that could be said was that the country had been given an almost universal knowledge of pain. There was no general will to action now; with the exhaustion that had come with their pain, people were only waiting for something to happen. People like Mehrdad and his family were living on their nerves. It might have been like this in the time of the Shah. Perhaps history here was curiously circular. Every great action—the war, the Revolution—had to be. And every great action led back in a chain to itself.



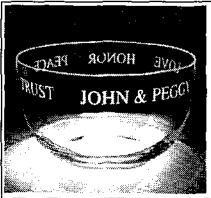
Now, almost two decades after the Shah and his group had disappeared, there were color photographs of the religious leaders everywhere. The country was full of Islamic rules, and the Guards and the Basijis were there to enforce them, in the afternoons in the park, at night on the highways. Young people like Fereydun's brother had known nothing but religious rule. Fereydun's brother had become a Nazi, in his innocent, dangerous way; he and his friends went out on some nights to mock the Guards. There was a sexual revolution among the young, and a falling away from the too strict, too pervasive faith. After all the pain, a new nihilism seemed to be preparing. ♦

"With elegant simplicity, Ellen Langer can completely change your life and transform your experience of reality."
—Deepak Chopra, M.D.


"Could radically change our concept of learning."
—Jerome Bruner
The Power of MINDFUL Learning
ELLEN J. LANGER

ADDISON-WESLEY

GRAND CANYON
Rafts offer effortless conveyance to the most spectacular landscapes on earth: Grand Canyon, Canyonlands, and Dinosaur National Parks on the Colorado, Snake, and Salmon Rivers. Trips vary from a weekend to two weeks, starting at $340. Call for a free catalog.
HOLIDAY RIVER EXPEDITIONS
1-800-554-RAFT
544 E 3900 S, SLC UT 84107 (801) 266-2087 FAX (801) 266-1448



CELEBRATION BOWL
Weddings - Anniversaries
Send someone you love a personalized crystal masterpiece. Hand blown and etched.
Special Inscriptions? Yes. Rush Orders? Absolutely.
8.5" - $129 12" - $239
408-427-3512

PRIVATE VIDEO CHESS LESSONS
from Bruce Pandolfini and Josh Waitzkin
the team that brought you
SEARCHING FOR BOBBY FISHER
$29.95 @ 1-888-99-CHESS
Master charge and Visa Accepted

THE WOMAN BEHIND THE WOMEN

Why did they all hate Clare Boothe Luce?

BY GORE VIDAL

IN the summer of 1967, I wrote my father from Venice about a ball given at the Palazzo Rezzonico. Guests arrived by gondola. Hundreds of torches lit up the façade of the palace on the Grand Canal, while inside thousands of candles burned in the great chandeliers as liveried footmen offered champagne to what looked to be every Perhapsburg in Europe. I had arrived with my assigned date, Clare Boothe Luce, the recent widow of the founder of *Time*, in whose giggly pages both my father and I had so often been fictionalized. *Time* was founded as a news magazine in 1923; actually it was an opinion magazine that presented real people as if they were characters in an ongoing melodrama where Christ and Capitalism were forever at risk. *Time* set, alas, the tone for most journalism since. The malice was unremitting, the humor merry as an open grave.

As our gilded barge docked, Clare and I stood, rather like Antony—well, Octavian—and Cleopatra, while the flashbulbs of paparazzi douched us in that blinding icy white light—limelight—each found so nourishing. At the ball, by candlelight, the sixty-four-year-old Clare was a perfect silvery moon set among the zircon stars.

I had known her slightly most of my life. Our relationship is pretty much summed up in the note I sent to my father:

> I said I felt novels were finished. She said, "Yes, but there's still a kind of fiction people love!" "Yes," I said, "*Time* magazine." "No," she said, "I meant fiction." "I know," I said, "I meant *Time*." "Don't be naughty," she said. "I meant detective stories." Then she insisted we be photographed in the room where Browning died (enclosed).

The picture is lost. But I recall that as we stood beside a round table (that he wrote at?) Clare, in a melting voice, misquoted "My Last Duchess." Gently, I corrected her. Then I misquoted Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "I shall but love thee better after death" sonnet, and she radiantly corrected me. One-upmanship was how we passed the rare times we saw each other.

The last time I saw Clare Boothe Luce was in 1985, on her final trip to Rome, where, from 1953 to 1956, she had been Eisenhower's turbulent ambassador, single-handedly saving Italy from Communism, blissfully unaware that Italian Communists had little interest in levelling the classes—her great fear—and little sympathy for the *ci-devant* Soviet Union. No matter. Clare was a fierce professional warrior for God and the deserving rich and, at one point, for Trieste to rejoin Italy—or was it the other way around?

The American Ambassador gave a dinner for her, which Imelda Marcos excitingly crashed. A ten-year-old godchild of mine was put next to Clare. She spent most of her time at table amusing the wide-eyed girl, who could not believe that an interesting and witty grownup would want to talk to her when there were so many fascinating folk at hand to dazzle. Clare was endlessly seductive. She was also a great many other things, as Sylvia Jukes Morris points out in "Rage for Fame: The Ascent of Clare Boothe Luce" (Random House; $30), which takes her life up to 1942, when, after three hit plays on Broadway and the power marriage to Henry R. Luce, she got elected to Congress from Connecticut; here Morris ends her first volume.

This is a biography of the sort that only real writers—as opposed, say, to professional scholars or journalists—can write. Morris has done serious research; yet she writes in short, sharp, dramatic bursts. Like her subject, she has a gift for aphorism: Clare became, in later life, "more conservative now that she had so much to conserve."

This sort of book does make one wonder what will become of the mallsters' novelists. Clare's life has every staple of pop fiction: illegitimacy (hers), poverty, a mother who advanced from lowly call girl to kept woman; then Clare's marriage to and divorce from a rich alcoholic by whom she had a daughter, later tragically killed. Once divorced, she goes to work, rises from caption writer at *Vogue* to managing editor of *Vanity Fair* while being herself somewhat kept by that busy financier and world-class bore, Bernard Baruch. Then on to the heights: the marriage to Luce in 1935; the hit plays; the elections won. . . . Hollywood's own Brontës, the Collins sisters, are left far behind in the gold dust of fact.

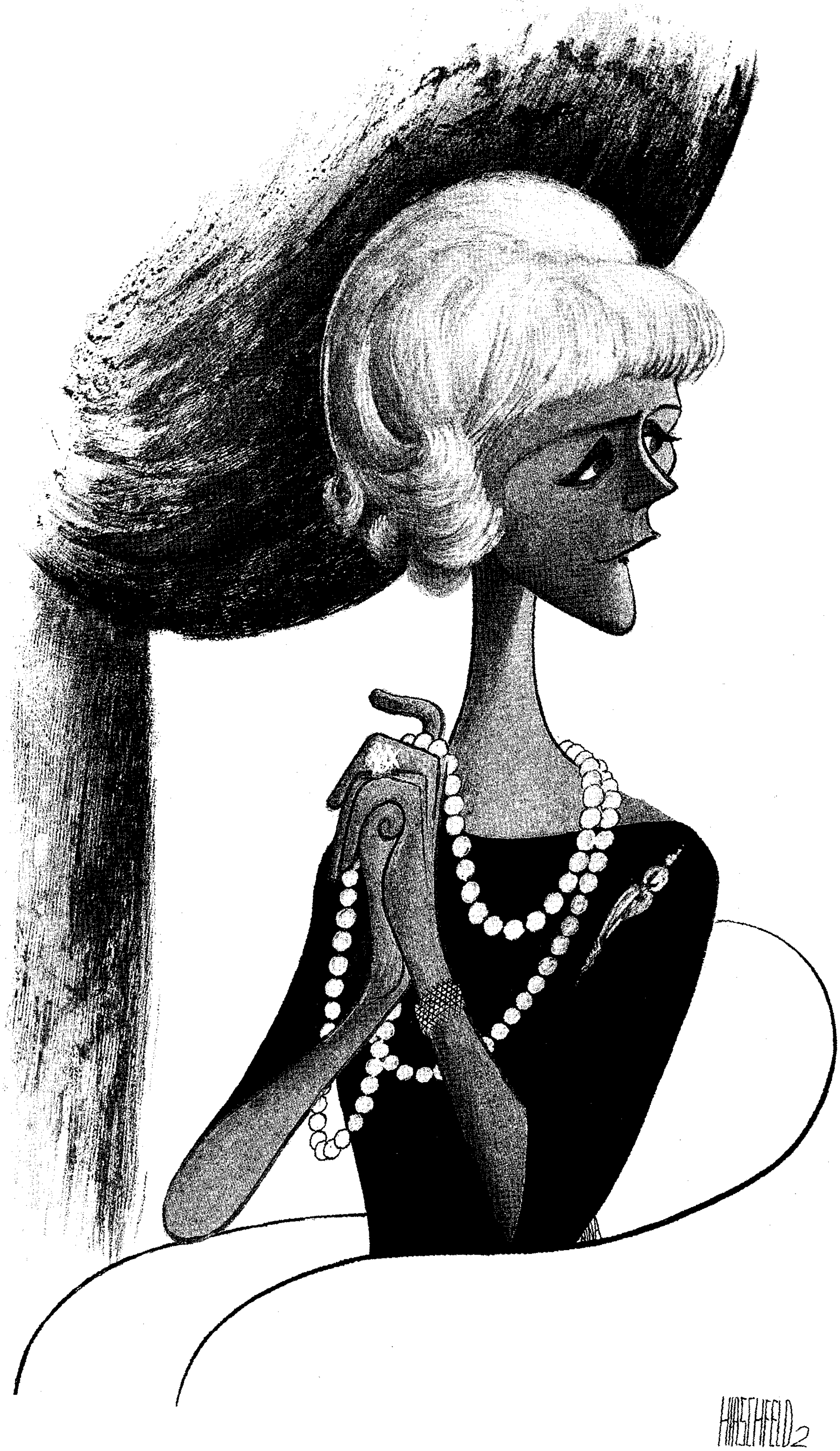
Everyone turns up in Clare's story, in or out of bed. One can only hope that Morris does not belong to the coitus-interruptus school of biography so starkly personified by her husband, Edmund Morris (after a splendid first volume on Theodore Roosevelt's life, he has kept us waiting for eighteen years for the next shoe to drop) and by sly Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who put aside *in medias res* his distinguished multi-volume life of F.D.R. to grind out fictional narratives about the wayward residents of Riverdale, New York,'s house of Atreus.

What was Clare like to know? I've used the word "seductive." Most people do. She was five feet five and slender, and she was often compared to a Dresden doll because of her yellow hair, blue eyes, and chiselled features—chiselled first by Noguchi in marble and then by a plastic surgeon, obliging Clare to call Noguchi in for an emergency session to make her marble nose conform to "Nature." Noguchi denies that he made the change, but he did. In any case, "Dresden doll" suggests a delicate figurine easily broken. Clare was not breakable. In her senior years, she swam, snorkelled, water-skied; and outlived most of her detractors, while occasionally dropping a bit of acid.

The day after the Embassy party, we

She was often compared to a Dresden doll, which suggests a delicate figurine easily broken. Clare was not breakable.

AL HIRSCHFELD/COURTESY OF THE MARGO FEIDEN GALLERIES LTD., N.Y.


HIRSCHFELD 2

had lunch at Vecchia Roma, near my apartment in Largo Argentina. Clare was accompanied by her biographer, Ms. Morris. I remember wondering, How is *this* going to turn out? Because if they become friends . . . ? A further complication for an honest biographer: Clare enjoyed lying about herself. But then there had been a great deal for her to lie about, starting with a failed-musician father, who never married her mother; and a mother who married a country doctor but was kept to the end by one Joel Jacobs (she wouldn't marry *him* because he was a Jew); and, finally, Clare's syphilitic brother, who failed at everything, including embezzlement (he got caught).

The author with Mrs. Luce at a masked ball in Venice, 1967.

GRAZIA NERI

But I did note, at lunch, that she was being candid about most things. Also, for once, she and I did not row about politics. Instead memory lane beckoned. My stepfather, Hugh D. Auchincloss (known as Hughdie), awash with Standard Oil money, befriended an impoverished Yale classmate, one Harry Luce, son of a missionary in China, awash with Jesus and raw ambition. Hughdie paid for Harry's first trip to Europe. In reflective mood, Hughdie would observe, "You know, wherever we went in Europe, Harry managed to make new enemies for the United States." Later, Hughdie put up a part of the eighty-six thousand dollars with which Harry started *Time;* when the magazine was profitable, he was repaid, without interest. Later still, Harry, no doubt in sentimental mood, tried to take Hughdie's wife away from him. I think that is why my mother was one of the few women of Clare's generation who did not hate her on principle. After all, she could afford to be generous: she had, as they used to say, put the horns on Clare. "Poor Clare," she would sigh, after she turned down Harry's offer of marriage in the spring of 1942. (I was in the next room and heard him say, "Clare doesn't understand me. We don't share the same interests. We're getting a divorce.") As it turned out, my mother did divorce Hughdie in order to marry not Luce but an Air Force general, while the Luces, now seriously incorporated as business partners, continued their manifold good works to the end of his life. She had her affairs. He had his. Understanding, finally, had everything to do with it.

At that last lunch, Clare mentioned the one story that most enraged her. A zealous convert to Catholicism, she is supposed to have been observed in the Vatican, haranguing the Pope, who kept saying, over and over again, ever more desperately, "But, Madam, I *am* Catholic."

"The story was invented by . . . " She named a name I've forgotten. "It's not like me at all, anyway." But, of course, it was. Once, when we were both going at each other in a political quarrel, she said, grimly, "I see you have a didactic side, too."

"Anyway, I had a talk with Punch Sulzberger"—the *Times*' publisher. "And I said I know that that story is going to be the lead in my obituary and it's absolutely untrue and you must do something about it."

"Did he?" The *Times*' little treacheries were almost in a class with Harry's own *Time* magazine.

"Well, you'll know before I will." I did, in 1987. The story was repeated widely.

AFTER Eleanor Roosevelt, Clare was easily the most hated woman of her time—she was too beautiful, too successful in the theatre, in politics, in marriage. Feminism as we now know it was a minor eccentricity in those days. Otherwise, she might have been admired as what she was, a very tough woman who had so perfectly made it in a man's world. But then, as one thinks of Hillary Clinton, perhaps not—of course, Hillary-haters are mostly men, and the men of long ago were generally fetched by Clare. It was the women who wanted to do her in. She had her revenge.

Clare had a savage tongue as well as the dangerous gift of phrase. In her ascent from poverty and from a life on the wrong side of just about every track the country had to offer, she educated herself, and became rich through a society marriage to one George Brokaw and then the union with Luce. She also maintained a long relationship with Bernard Baruch, thirty-two years her senior, with whom she had, she records sadly in her diary, "half-sex." "He gave her millions," my mother would say with wonder. But Clare would say that he only invested money for her, and, as a popular playwright, she earned a great deal.

With Clare's second Broadway play, she let the girls have it. "The Women," with its all-female cast, was a great success in the theatre and on the screen. The women struck back as best they could: Clare could not have written the play all by herself; it was actually the work of George Kaufman and Moss Hart, together or separately. Finally, Kaufman made a public statement: If he had written "The Women," "why should I sign it Clare Boothe?" No one seems to have had any more than an editorial hand in a comedy whose bubbling misogyny was Clare at her purest.

But, from that moment on, practically everything she wrote was supposedly the work of a man, including her wartime reportage for *Life*. Rather like Hillary Clinton, today, Clare could not be allowed to win.

At lunch: "Do you realize that because of Harry I was never on the cover of *Time*?"

"He kept you off?"

"No, *they* kept me off. The editors." I should note that for almost a half century to appear on the cover of *Time* meant that its subject was a permanent, for good or ill, member of the world's grandest vanity fair.

Even Dawn Powell, our best mid-century novelist, had it in for Clare. Dawn herself had enjoyed almost no success from her novels and plays; then along comes what she regards as a dilettante beauty who takes Broadway—and all the other ways save the strait and narrow—by the proverbial storm. Dawn parodies the Luces as Julian and Amanda in "A Time to Be Born." Like everyone else, Dawn takes it for granted that Amanda doesn't bother to do her own writing. Amanda believes that "the tragedy of the Attic poets, Keats, Shelley, Burns, was not that they died young but that they were obliged by poverty to do all their own writing."

Dawn also reflects another generally held theory about Clare: that a woman so attractive to men must be, at heart, cold and calculating and . . . yes, the ultimate putdown in sexist times, frigid. "She knew," writes Dawn, "exactly what she wanted from life, which was, in a word, everything. . . . She had a genuine distaste for sexual intimacy . . . but there were so many things to be gained by trading on sex and she thought so little of the process that she itched to use it as currency once again."

Morris has read Clare's diaries; and candid they are. Apparently, she liked sex very much. At eighteen she fell in love with a young Army lieutenant who then married an older woman with money, proving to Clare that man is "only a sublimated anthropoid ape." But the iron—or should one say the bright gold?—had entered her soul. "I'll marry for money," she confided to a girlfriend. "Lots of it. . . . Damned if I'll ever love any mere man. Money! I need it and the power it brings, and someday you shall hear my name spoken of as famous." This was fifteen years before Scarlett O'Hara sprang, full-bosomed, from the pages of "Gone with the Wind."

In 1922, Clare's mother and Clare were taken to Europe by her stepfather, Dr. Austin. In the shabby streets of defeated Berlin, Clare had a vastation. Newspapers were sailing along the sidewalk. One wrapped itself around her leg, she told me in 1970 over lunch at her beachside pleasure dome in Hawaii. "My mother had a sententious side to her—which I've inherited, they tell me." Clare gave me a quick look to cut me off at the pass. "Anyway, when she saw that newspaper she said, 'This is the sort of thing that happens when a society grows decadent and no longer keeps itself up.' I was deeply impressed. Now you ask me why I gave up New York. Well, one day not long after Harry died, I came out of the Sherry Netherland and a newspaper suddenly wrapped itself around my leg. I heard my mother's voice, saw a street even worse than that dusty Berlin street, realized the Weimar Republic had arrived in New York, and so I went off to live in Hawaii, happily beneath the American flag."

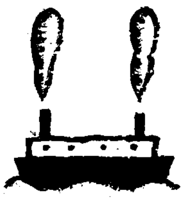
In youth, Clare tried silent-movie acting, without success. Later she worked briefly for that passionate women's-rights activist Alva Vanderbilt Belmont. But Clare was not made for distributing pamphlets. She was sexually experienced by the time she married money in the form of George Brokaw, who was an alcoholic then in his mid-forties. Although Clare claimed to have brought a virginal body to the bridal suite at the Plaza Hotel, she also claimed that she wanted to jump out the window on their wedding night. When her new husband didn't simply pass out, the mustard remained largely uncut, or, as she later put it, with hardly a virginal tentativeness, "The Bill of Fare is neither varied nor sufficient." Eventually, a daughter was born, followed by a friendly divorce.

The restless Mrs. Brokaw wanted a job at *Vogue*. When nothing seemed available, she simply arrived one day, took over a desk, and soon was put to work writing picture captions. No one ever actually hired her. But everyone was delighted that she was there. She was now twenty-six. What next on the Bill of Fare? Why not Fame? As she wrote in her school yearbook, "What rage for fame attends both great and small." This aphorism is perhaps not airtight—the small are too busy trying to survive ever to daydream of a ride in triumph through the streets of Persepolis.

From *Vogue* she moved to Condé Nast's *Vanity Fair*, where she wrote a great deal of lively copy. Condé Nast's wife, Leslie, was a daughter of Bilitis, in those days the most secretive cult in the United States. Clare, ever experimental, allowed Leslie to seduce her, commenting afterward on the prodigious length and sharpness of Leslie's fingernails. But the central affair in Clare's life was with Donald Freeman, a young, brilliant, unbeautiful editor who taught her a good deal about writing. When Freeman killed himself in a car crash, Clare was consoled by the fact that she was his successor as managing editor of *Vanity Fair;* she also got her hands on his journals, and kept them. In his last letter to her he wrote, "It is only human nature that I should be discarded—what with . . . men of affairs like Mr. Baruch sighing for your time. . . . It has been only in the past few days that the cloud of my three years' love for you has been gradually lifting from the brain of one who has almost been a madman for the whole time." She was now twenty-nine.

Two years later, at a dinner, Fame arrived in the shape of "a tall sandy-haired man whose copious eyebrows arched over narrow eyes." Apparently, she teased Henry R. Luce about the flaws in his latest magazine, *Fortune*, and suggested he publish a picture magazine. (She had given Condé Nast the same advice, but he lacked the money.) Luce did his usual social number, firing dozens of questions at her, like a prosecuting attorney; then he looked at his watch, said he was late, left. Clare thought him the rudest man she had ever met and was, of course, hooked.

They next met at an Elsa Maxwell ball at the Waldorf-Astoria. After a drink together, he said that he had something he wanted to tell her. They found as private a spot as they could. Clare expected a job offer. Instead she had a Luce offer: "The French call it *coup de foudre*. I know you are the one woman in my life." Clare was astonished: she had been in his life, thus far, less than an hour. Luce also said, according to Morris, that “whether or not romance developed between them . . . he had decided to end his marriage of eleven years. For at least the last two, he had felt a need for a different kind of companionship. His wife did not share his interests.” Six years later, I heard him make the exact same speech to my mother—only by then Clare was the wife.



In Miami, while the *foudre* was still electrifying him, they became as one sexually; and this proved to be an ominous failure. Although no man can become a daughter of Bilitis, Morris tells us that “in old age, Clare painfully recalled Harry’s strong hands and long fingers. ‘If he touched you it was like he was tearing you apart. I suppose today I would have given him a handbook of sex, but in those days women were expected to keep quiet.’ ” I must say it is hard to imagine Clare not lecturing him on the spot, but then her clumsy partner meant not only money but Fame. He was, periodically, impotent with Clare, unlike with his first wife, with whom “he simply did it and then rolled over and thought about *Time*.”

Whatever their incompatibilities, each needed the idea of the other. What failed them in the sack sustained them on the page, and they wrote each other interesting analyses of themselves. Clare: “A badly burnt child I am so afraid of happiness, that let a perfect moment begin to unfold like a rose in my hands, and I instantly try to crush it.” Harry: “Happiness, I thought until recently, had nothing whatever to do with my life. . . . Now I think otherwise. . . . There are those who can always hear, beneath the rumble of traffic, the stars singing.” One must not forget that he was the indulgent employer of the dread poet Archibald MacLeish. Clare: “Most everyone that knew me casually preferred to think of me as a cold, remote, shrewd and ambitious woman: I have always contrived to behave so in their company.” Others thought her a sexpot, but, “until I met you I never knew anyone who challenged enough of the real heart and mind of me, to interrupt me in my emotional juggling.” Thus Lioness to Lion.

The first Mrs. Luce took Harry to the cleaners; as a result, he became a resident of Connecticut, where there was no state income tax. Clare returned to playwriting, but, as Morris points out, “reluctant to be totally honest about her experiences, she was at the same time so self-obsessed that she was unable to write well about anyone or anything else.” Two days after her play “Abide with Me” failed on Broadway, she married Luce. *Time’s* play reviewer was in a bind. He drafted a favorable review. Luce, in his role as God, said, “Show isn’t that good. Write what you thought.” He did. Later she beat Harry at golf; he never played with her again. Also, her attempts to be helpful with the magazines were sternly rebuffed, particularly when she expected to have a hand in what she always claimed was her original idea, a photo magazine that became the highly popular *Life*. Soon Lion was more or less permanently impotent with Lioness, not perhaps the best situation for a man of a romantic if narrow temperament to find himself in. But they had by then been more or less permanently incorporated, with him as the highly potent senior partner. With no role to play in his magazines, Clare was obliged to make her own fame, in what was then, after movie stardom, the showiest place of all, Broadway.

In three days in 1936 Clare wrote the first draft of “The Women,” par for the Noël Coward course, to which she brought her . . . what is it? a mashie? Anyway, commercially the play was a hole in one, and the all-star film that George Cukor made of it still amuses audiences. At the time, this hymn to misogyny rather shocked the gentlemen while, perversely, the ladies were delighted with Clare’s witty send-ups of *other* ladies. Meanwhile, 1936 was also a year of triumph for Harry. *Life* appeared, and was a success. Harry was now having Presidential daydreams. Then *The New Yorker’s* Wolcott Gibbs did a Profile of him, in which *Time’s* awful phony Homeric style was parodied: “Prone he to wave aside pleasures . . . argues still that ‘names make news,’ that he would not hesitate to print a scandal involving his best friend”—or get off with his wife. When Harry complained to *The New Yorker’s* editor, Harold Ross, he was told that the Luce periodicals had a reputation for “crassness in description, for cruelty and scandal-mongering and insult.” That was the upside. As for Harry himself, he was held to be “mean,” even “scurrilous” at times, and was “in a hell of a position to ask anything.” What price glory?

IN 1938, the Luces decided to check out Hitler’s Germany. It was Harry who missed the point, and Clare, possibly because of her long affair with Baruch and her mother’s affair with Jacobs, who quickly saw the dangerous rise in anti-Semitism. (Incidentally, it is now the custom to establish that anyone worthy of an “intimate” biography must be revealed not only as a homosexual but as an anti-Semite: plainly the two most dreadful “preferences” of all. Clare did have at least one fling with a daughter of Bilitis, but she was no anti-Semite.) Where Harry noted, approvingly, that Hitler had “suspended the class system,” whatever that meant, Clare saw a close analogy between the Nazis and our own Ku Klux Klan: “Indeed the swastika never burns more brightly or savagely in the Schwarzwald than the Fiery Cross of the Klan once burned in the bayous and cypress swamps of Dixie.” This was from the introduction to her next Broadway hit, “Kiss the Boys Good-Bye,” set in the South. Meanwhile, her friend Baruch was trying to get Roosevelt to rearm. “The nation is not ready,” said the President, who, himself, was.

Like so many successful commercialites, Clare had immortal longings. Would she—could she—reach Shaw’s level? George Bernard, not Irwin (who had rebuffed her advances). Eleanor Roosevelt wrote that Miss Boothe might indeed be a first-class playwright, “when the bitterness of the experiences which she has evidently had are completely out of her system.” Clare thanked her for the kind thought but said that the cold “stupidity” of this world had done her in, she feared, as a potential builder of another, “sweeter place.”

Back to Europe in the crucial year 1939. Clare flirted with Gertrude Stein. Then, in two weeks, she wrote her anti-Nazi play, “Margin for Error,” a somewhat confused melodrama with quite a few sharp, funny lines: “The Third Reich allows no margin for error.”

Clare was now turning more and more political. In September, 1939, she marched into the office of *Life’s* editor and said that she wanted to be a war correspondent. She was no longer just the boss's interfering wife. She was a famous writer and, as such, she was hired, though Harry worried about their being separated for so long, even though they had not been getting on. So, as was her habit, Clare wrote him a position paper, noting that for him "to conjure up some dominant discontent or misery out of such good fortune as ours is positively wanton." Then:

> There are times when a man or woman does better to act with sense than to react with sensibility. This seems to me to be one of them. . . . I would like to show more sympathy to you in this matter, but . . . if I did, I should not be acting with as much love as I feel for you. You see, I not only love you . . . but I like you, and admire you far more than you think. Indeed, you always seem to be afraid that if I didn't love you blindly, I would dislike you openly. That is not the case. . . . Now darling, to bed. I do not like to go to bed without you. But somehow, lately, even when I'm with you, I seem to go to bed without you.

Had Broadway been less sternly lowbrow, Clare might have been our Congreve.

Harry's response was hardly in the same class. In short, he said he feared Time's wingèd wastebasket. By February, 1940, they were discussing divorce. Meanwhile, war correspondent Clare was having a splendid time in Europe. Lecherous Ambassador to Britain Joe Kennedy had designs on her as well as a good deal of pro-Nazi propaganda to pour into her ear. Clare was at the Ritz Hotel in Paris when the Germans swept through France. She wanted to stay until the very end, but on May 30th the concierge told her that she must leave the now deserted hotel, because "the Germans are coming." When Clare asked him how he knew, he said, "Because they have reservations."

Clare's reports were well written and became a successful book, "Europe in the Spring." Dorothy Parker's review was headed "All Clare on the Western Front." "While it is never said," Parker notes, "that the teller is the bravest of all those present, it comes through."

Clare and Harry were both interventionists by now, and they spent a night at the White House, working over President Roosevelt, who was all smiling amiability. Clare thought he looked old, with trembling hands. Yet it was fairly certain that in November he would run for a third term—and why not? A fourth one if the country should be at war.

Although politically minded, Clare could not be said to have any proper politics. She was basically a vulgar Darwinist. The rich were better than the poor; otherwise they would not be rich. She could mock the *idle* rich, but the self-made must be untaxed by such do-gooders as the Roosevelts. Harry was much the same, except for one great bee in his bonnet: he believed, fervently, that it was the task of the United States in the twentieth century to Christianize China, the job that his dad, the missionary, had so signally failed to do. The damage that this one bee did to our politics is still with us, as the Christian right now beats its jungle drums in the chigger belt, calling for war with China.

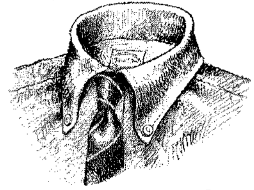
Clare became a kingmaker. She would elect as President Wendell Willkie, Roosevelt's Republican challenger. Morris describes her appearance at Madison Square Garden: "She wore a plain black dress, and as she stepped forward on the platform, a powerful spotlight beamed down from distant rafters onto her glossy blond hair. The crowd responded with wild enthusiasm even before she opened her mouth. None of her experiences on a movie set or theater stage had equaled this moment. It was the giant arena she had sought since adolescence." Even H. L. Mencken was impressed. "Slim, beautiful and charming . . . when she began to unload her speech, it appeared at once that she was also a fluent and effective talker." *Don't cry for me, Dun & Bradstreet.*

Two years later, she would be elected to Congress from a Connecticut district; she served two terms. The team of Luce would continue until his death, in 1967.

At our last meeting, in my Roman flat, the sirocco was blowing and the shutters were banging. An Italian woman who occasionally did typing for me unexpectedly arrived. When she saw the former Ambassador, she nearly fainted. She had worked for Clare at the Embassy. Clare was amiable. The woman left. I think it was Morris who asked what her function had been. "Actually," Clare said, "she worked for my consort. She was traffic coördinator for Harry's countesses."

Morris heads her long list of acknowledgments with "Above all, I wish to thank the late Clare Boothe Luce for cooperating with me on this biography

BAGGIER & BETTER™



GET FREE TODAY!

Our exceptionally generous cut and unmistakeable 3 5/16" full roll collar

frees you from tight fit, skimpy collars and spotty quality you're used to. Traditional 100% yarn-dyed cotton oxford-meticulously hand cut, single needle stitched throughout-long sleeves and tail. Guaranteed impeccable after 100+ launderings. Sizes 14-17 1/2, 32-36. White/Blue. $5 shpg. Large/Tall, 2 7/8" straight collar, other fabrics also available.

$39.95 - first time buyers Reg. $50 (401) 635-4272

MERCER & SONS Box 63-A33 Adamsville RI 02801

Experience a summer by the sea.

This is a Maine inn the way you've imagined it–attentive service, beautiful gardens, lobster bakes, miles of sandy beaches and spectacular cliff walks.

BLACK POINT INN
RESORT
on the ocean
Prouts Neck
Scarborough, ME 04074
1-800-258-0003
(207)883-4126
Fax(207)883-9976

KUKLA, FRAN AND OLLIE™

FIRST TIME ON VIDEO

Premiere Collector's Edition

5 Videos Plus FREE Poster
"That Perfect Gift"

1-800-309-2392

$69.95
Plus $5 Shipping & Handling

Camden's Authentic Summer Hotel Since 1901

WHITEHALL
INN

1-800-789-6565
Box 558, Camden, ME 04843

Experience Maine's finest seacoast village in the tradition of style and grace. 50 rooms, fine dining, wine & spirits.

Facing Prostate Cancer?

Explore all the options.
For FREE information call
Theragenics Cancer Information Center,
1-800-458-4372

The William Noll Orchestra

Rock, Elegance, Swing, & Disco
Having a Wonderful Event?
Call for a demo CD
New York: (212) 581-3295
Atlanta: (404) 841-9989

the BagSmith™
We've got success in the bag!™
BriefBag
Dad uses his for weekends - 1400 cubic inches!
$80 plus shipping
SIZE: 16" L 14" H 7½" W
Mom uses hers in the courtroom - excellent interior detailing!
VISA & MC
1·888·879·7224
(1·888·TRY·R·BAG)
Made of sturdy, lightweight ramie polyester - fully lined
Free gift with purchase before Father's Day!
Find The BagSmith Collection online: www.bagsmith.com

Get the Most Out of London Theatre
Subscribe to **LONDON THEATRE NEWS**, the illustrated monthly newsletter, and enjoy complete up-to-the-minute coverage of London theatre.
- Complete West End Theatre Listings
- Timely Recommendations • Opening Night Reviews • Exclusive Interviews
- A Convenient Ticket-Booking Service
- Dining Tips • and much more!

$23 for 3 months • $51 annually
Call toll-free **1-800-779-0077**. Or send check to: London Theatre News, Suite 620, 12 East 86th Street, New York, NY 10028

LONDON
Offering a smashing selection of flats for holiday and business travelers
CHEZ VOUS
1001 Bridgeway, Suite 245, Sausalito, CA 94965
Call (415) 331-2535 Fax (415) 331-5296

The Buccaneer St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands
Golf, tennis, exquisite beaches and more... all on a tropical 340 acre estate. Experience the charm of the Caribbean the way it used to be at this historic property, operated by the same family since 1947.
See your Travel Professional or call 800-255-3881

Teak Garden Furnishings
Free Shipment from Stock
Interior & Exterior Use
Country Casual
1-301-540-0040
80 Page Colour Catalogue $3.00
17317 Germantown Rd. Ste. 2077 Germantown, MD 20874

Even a simple estate plan can save your family up to $250,000 in taxes.
Jill A. Kupferberg, Esq.
In practice since 1975
212·223·3905
767 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

during the last six years of her life. From the age of fifteen . . . she had kept letters, diaries, scrapbooks and masses of other documents, all of which she courageously allowed me to see." Courageously? Oh, dear. Could that knowing smile in the middle distance belong to the inexorable Janet Malcolm, brooding upon yet another example of her iron law, the necessary betrayal of subject by observer-writer?

She also submitted to countless hours of interviews and let me stay and work with her in her Washington apartments, her Honolulu house, and a rented mansion one summer in Newport. We spent time together in New York City, her birthplace, in Connecticut, her main residence for most of her life, and at Mepkin Abbey, the former Luce plantation in South Carolina, where she would be buried. We travelled to Canada and London for semi-centennial productions of "The Women," and to Rome to see the villa and embassy where she had lived and worked as United States Ambassador to Italy. The fruits of that last research, as well as details of our complex personal relationship, will appear in the second volume of this biography.

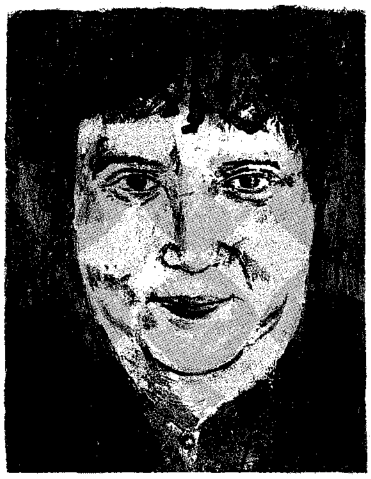
Complex? All about Eve? The Lady or the Tiger? Rosebud?

Whatever wonders are yet to come, Sylvia Jukes Morris has written a model biography of a woman who, if born a man, could easily have been a President, for what that's worth these days: a cool billion, I believe. As it is, if nothing else, Clare Boothe Luce certainly enlivened the dull—when not downright dangerous—century her husband so pompously hailed as "the American." Now we are more modest or, as the current President somewhat edgily put it, we are the one "indispensable"—or was it "undisposable"?—nation, while *Time* no longer sets the pace for partisan ad hominem malice. Although Harry's poisonous gift to American journalism is still widely imitated, the "fame" of the Luces themselves has been erased as century ends. Of their once proud monuments, nothing beside remains in the lone and level sands except the logo of a lousy, incoherent conglomerate, Time Warner. ♦

MURIEL GOES TO THE MOVIES

A novel well suited to its subjects.

BY JOHN UPDIKE



Muriel Spark

KAREN CALDICOTT

MURIEL SPARK will be eighty next year, and some seven years have passed since her last novel, "Symposium." So it is pleasant to report that "Reality and Dreams" (Houghton Mifflin; $22), vaporous though its title seems, is as intricate and bright as the toy of a child emperor, and more substantial than such recent entries in her extensive bibliography as "The Only Problem" and "A Far Cry from Kensington." Its sixty-three-year-old hero, Tom Richards, directs films and has fallen off a crane he insisted on directing from. We find him in a hospital, amid a flickering confusion of nurses and loved ones. The loved ones sift down to just three: Claire, his "nice kind wife," in her mid-fifties, rich and lovely and endlessly indulgent of a creative artist's vagaries; Cora, twenty-nine, his utterly beautiful daughter by his first marriage, to "a different sort of beauty, of Bulgarian-Polish origin"; and Marigold, the somewhat younger, unaccountably disagreeable and awkward daughter born to Tom and Claire. How two such charmers could have produced such an uncharming child baffles them both: "Her parents had searched through the past, consulted psychiatrists, took every moment to bits. In no way could she be explained." Marigold, offended by her parents' infidelities, keeps urging them to divorce, "not realising that she—that the appalling nature of their only offspring—was mainly the cause of Claire and Tom's inseparability. . . . Even her disagreeable face kept them together like birds in a storm."

All this is rather banteringly perverse, in the manner of Ronald Firbank and Aldous Huxley, but Spark's oracular eye is, as always, on the skull of damnation behind society's grinning face. Her novels, though short, are dense, many-layered. On one level, this is the story of Jeanne, a nondescriptly pretty actress picked by Tom to play the part of "the hamburger girl," a girl he glimpsed serving up hamburgers at the edge of a campsite in the Haute-Savoie; his fantasies about the hamburger girl (including killing his wife so that he can bestow a fortune upon her) propel him through a movie initially titled "The Hamburger Girl," but Jeanne remains a bit actor in it, to her frustration. She becomes querulous, takes drugs, and is destroyed, a victim of the film world and the whim of an artist. Yet she is not pitied, by the author or by the other characters. When she complains to Claire, "I've been used," the prompt response is "We're all used."

The oft changed movie title becomes, in the end, "Unfinished Business." Marigold has aroused in Claire and Tom "a feeling of frustration, of unfinished business," and from this angle the novel is Marigold's story. Disliked by her parents, neglected by her husband (who writes travel books), she conducts research into the currently hot issue of "redundancy," sleeps with a number of the interview subjects, disappears, makes headlines, is finally found, and is cast by her father in his newest movie, as a male—Cedric the Celt, a fifth-century centurion's servant, who foresees the future, up to the very present. Marigold's "dark sullen ugly face" haunts her father's dreams as that of "a young man sent mad by complete knowledge of the future." Unlike her beautiful, doted-upon sister, she can act. Having played her role as Cedric, she departs for America, one of the netherworlds to which Spark consigns her less favored creations. In the tradition of the tiny-eyed Sandy Stranger in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie," Marigold is a homely truth-teller, a witchy Cassandra.

This is also a novel about movie-making, put together with rapid cuts and saucy non sequiturs. Unreeling at the pace of MTV, the narrative is always a jump or two ahead of the reader. Tom, surprisingly a Christian believer, wonders if we are all characters in one of God's dreams: "Our dreams, yes, are insubstantial; the dreams of God, no. They are real, frighteningly real. They bulge with flesh, they drip with blood." Art approximates those dreams. Though handsome and rich and wanton, Tom is a serious worker in "that world of dreams and reality which he was at home in, the world of filming scenes, casting people in parts, piecing together types and shadows, facts and illusions." He tells Dave, the West Indian he hires to drive him randomly around London, "Everything I do is basically connected with my work. Everything." Spark, with the filmic dream world as her topic, seems especially focussed and directorial, declaring her controlling presence in such interjections as "It is time now to describe what Tom looked like," "It would be useless to give here the name of the latest director," and "The police eventually believed the boy, whose name for the present purpose is irrelevant." The style is peremptory, summary, swift: we learn in a sentence that "Unfinished Business," whose tangled progress has taken up two-thirds of the novel, "was a decided success." The various sexual liaisons are touched upon with a speed exceeding that of a French farce; sex has adjusted to the age of the fax and the spot interview. Marigold's discoverer does not contact her parents or the police; he goes to a television network and "for a fair fee" conducts the camera crew to the hideout. Humanity is up for quick sale. A certain nostalgia for slower, more relational days creeps in; Tom mourns old friends—Auden, Graham Greene, John Braine, Mary McCarthy—who are more plausibly old friends of Muriel Spark's. She has grown into the con-

RARE DALI PRINTS

If you own, or are considering the purchase of a Salvador Dali print....

SALVADOR DALI
A RETROSPECTIVE OF MASTER PRINTS

Our exclusive catalog features full-color pictures of more than 500 signed limited edition Salvador Dali prints. Each print is fully documented by **Albert Field**, curator of the Salvador Dali Archives, and guaranteed authentic. The catalog, "Salvador Dali: A Retrospective of Master Prints," is a must for anyone interested in works signed by Dali. Call now and we will rush you a **free** copy of "The Salvador Dali Collector's Newsletter". ($15 per issue)

1-(800) 275-3254
ask for Dept. NY

http://www.daligallery.com • FAX 310-454-2090
Brana Fine Art • 15332 Antioch St., # 108, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

BOOKS ON TAPE® #1
World's Largest Selection™

W.E.B. GRIFFIN BLOOD AND HONOR

- Best Sellers on Cassette
- Full-length Readings
- Call for Free Brochure

http://booksontape.com
(800) 626-3333
Box 7900-N, Newport Beach, CA 92658
Reg. U.S. Pat. & T.M. Off.

MEPHISTO
World's Finest Walking Shoes!

"MATCH" for MEN, "RUSH" for WOMEN.
Assorted seasonal colors; Men's: 9 - 13 N, 6 - 16 M, $240.
Women's: 7 - 11 N, 5 - 11 M, $230.
OPEN SUNDAYS 12 - 5:30 p.m.
MAIL & PHONE ORDERS INVITED — CALL:
800-626-5270
FOR OUR CATALOGUE!
on the web at:
www.harrys-shoes.com

HARRY'S SHOES
2299 Broadway, New York, NY 10024
212-874-2035

EUROPE by CAR
ONE ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, NY 10020
212-581-3040 • 800-223-1516
9000 SUNSET BLVD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90069
213-272-0424 • 800-252-9401
SAVE ON RENTALS • TAX-FREE LEASES
www.europebycar.com

Hiking • Kayaking • Cruising
Maine Ocean Front Lodge
Feel, taste & smell Nature at her finest. Delicious meals, 1st rate accommodations, Island exploring, wildlife galore call Toll Free 1-888-559-5057
Maine Coast Experience

dition of the ancients in "Memento Mori." Tom says, "Essentially, Dave, a person consists of memories."

Yet in the sea of lighthearted betrayal and rampant redundancy there is an island of constancy: Claire, "rich, discreet about her men, tolerant of his women, a good hostess and good-looking." Her wealth derives from an American fortune, Blantyre Biscuits, Inc. Her tolerance of Tom's infatuations stems from respect for his artistry: "And to be honest, thought Claire, the reason why I stick by him is that he's an interesting film director." The novel in its final turns becomes a love poem to her. She is, we are told early, "emotionally imaginative," and in a late scene she is the site of a sudden deepening of the book's flat, jumpy human perspectives:

> Claire, not knowing if Tom had slept with the girl or not, maintained an air of kindly coolness and of other miraculous and contradictory qualities such as she had learnt to adopt in the course of her life with Tom: maternal extraneity, professional amateurism, understanding and incomprehension, yes and no.

At the end, both Tom and Cora feel "her strength and courage sustaining them" as she serves them drinks in a nuclear trinity of well-heeled beauty. Some readers may be disconcerted by the apparent equation of spiritual worthiness with money and good looks. But in the dreams of God, bulging with flesh, body and spirit are close to identical. "What is the difference between body and spirit?" Tom asks his masseur, Ron. Ron answers, "There is a difference but both are very alike, you know." Tom, perhaps scenting heresy, says, "At least, interdependent I should say." In Spark's first novel, the remarkable "Comforters," the nerved-up heroine feels a visceral repugnance toward the pious but pneumatic Mrs. Hogg, who awakens her "loathing of human flesh where the bulk outweighs the intelligence." Much nicer are lithe Cora and Claire in their fondly mentioned skintight jeans, and, to be honest, aren't health and wealth more spiritually attractive than their opposites? If we find undemocratic Dame Muriel's distribution of providential grace, well, whose dreamed creatures are these? Hers and no one else's, she always makes perfectly clear. ♦

POSTCARD FROM CANNES

BY ANTHONY LANE

THIS year, the Cannes Festival held its fiftieth anniversary. It was a fitting moment to take stock: to stand back and marvel at this luminous fortnight, as stars and stargazers came together to honor the greatest medium of mass communication that has ever existed. It was time, in short, to celebrate the mobile phone.

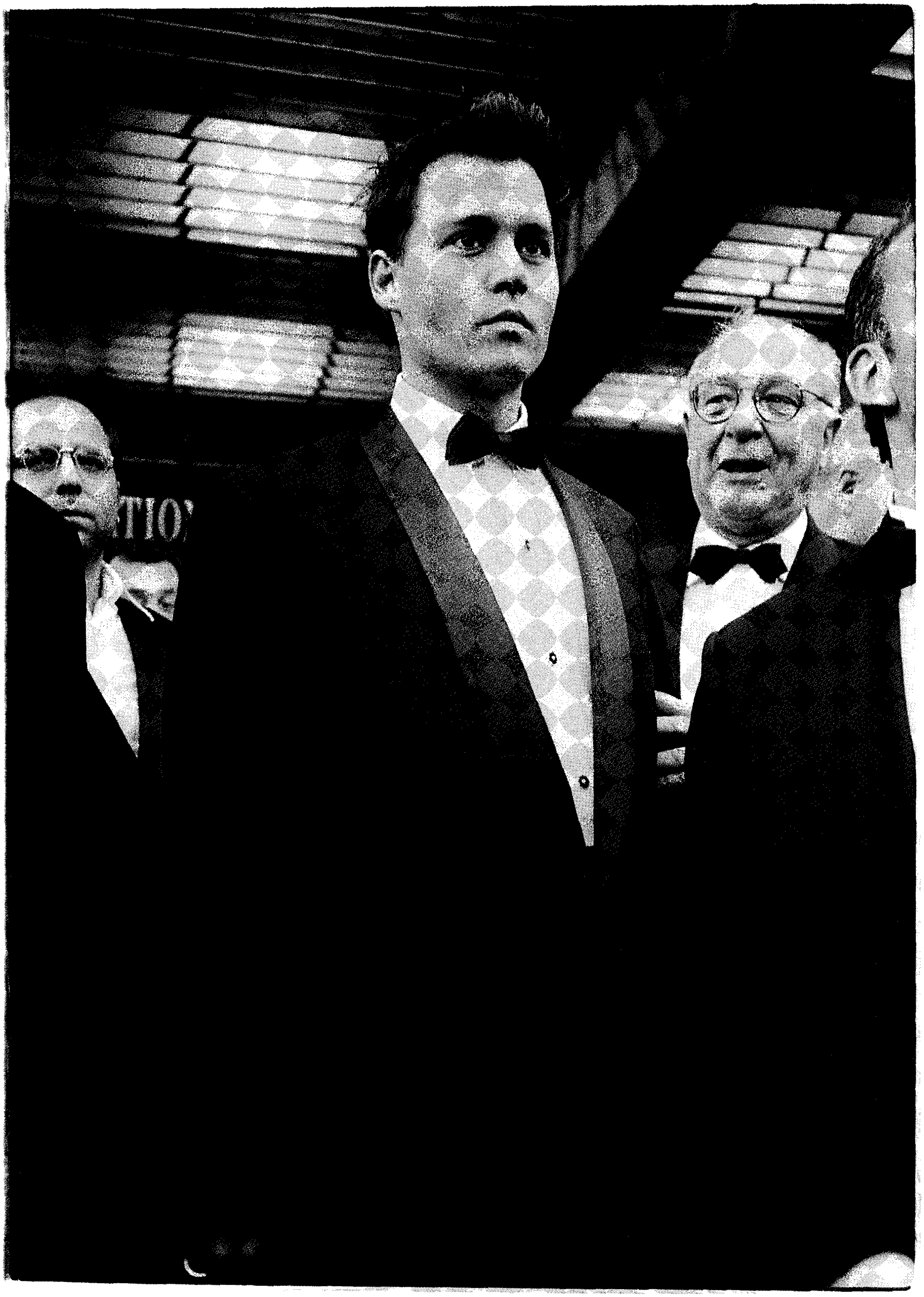
True, there were ugly rumors flying around that some people were laying down their Motorolas and going to watch *films*. But the sombre silence of a movie theatre is hardly likely to deter the dedicated phoner; if anything, it's a good place to talk. As the lights went down on the first night, with an audience of thousands—among them Bruce Willis and Demi Moore—preparing to watch "The Fifth Element," a public announcement asked us politely to switch our phones off for the duration of the screening. We nodded sagely, in communal disapproval of this shocking new trend. Then a phone rang. We giggled like convent girls. During the opening ceremony, Jeanne Moreau—the spirit of Cannes incarnate, with a voice that made you feel you were being seduced by a coffee grinder—had spoken of "*la solitude des hommes dans ce monde moderne.*" A nice idea, but there wasn't much solitude in the air at Cannes 1997, not with all the electronic messages crackling through the atmosphere. If you stood on the Croisette at noon and threw an egg into the sky, it would come down fried.

Jean-Luc Godard, who was in town to present two portions of his "Histoire(s) du Cinéma," did his best to shield us from the blast. In the course of a witty and ruminative press conference, he berated the beeping generation. "I have never heard a real conversation on a mobile phone," he said. "It is always, 'See you in ten minutes.' " But that's just the point: the crucial thing in Cannes is never whom you saw ten minutes ago, or what happened yesterday, but what comes next.

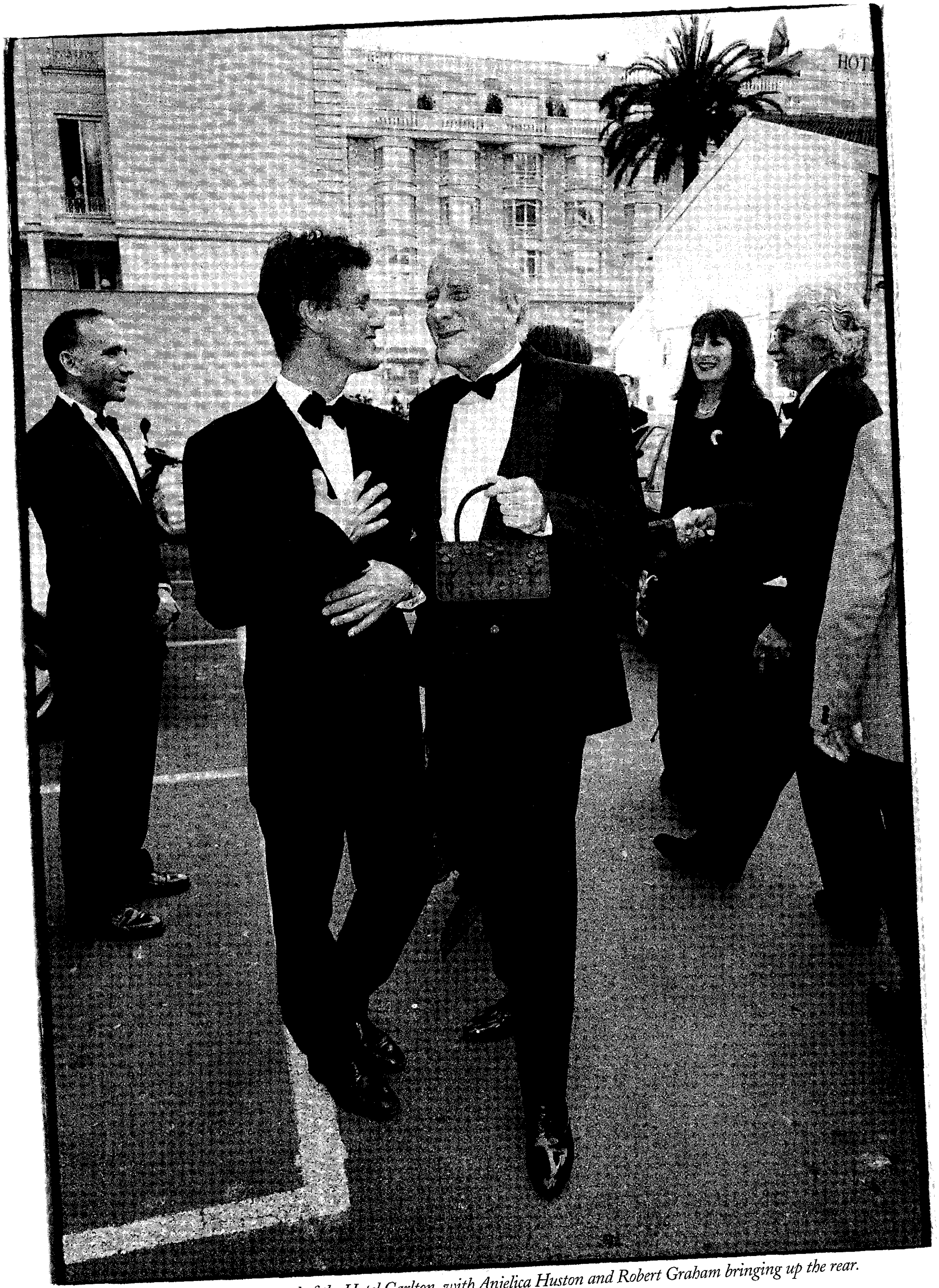
Hence "The Fifth Element" and its ensuing jamboree: both were fulsomely derided, but, in their blend of frenzy and dawdling, they set the tone for the whole festival. After the screening was over, we queued to get out of the auditorium, then we queued to get onto buses. It was a hell of a squeeze: movers, shakers, and the occasional star, all straphanging together. The buses drove us a few hundred yards toward a vast blue nipple-shaped tent that had been constructed—at a cost of more than three million dollars, it was said—solely as an arena for the "Fifth Element" party. That short trip was the highlight of my stay in Cannes; standing next to Greta Scacchi as you go over a speed bump is one of those things, I feel, that every man should try to do once in his life. Having reached the nipple, we hung around some more; I passed the time contemplating Demi Moore's dress, which looked as if she had tried to leave her airplane too quickly and taken the seat with her. Finally, on the stroke of midnight, we sat down to cold red mullet. An hour later, we watched a Jean-Paul Gaultier fashion show. And thirty minutes after *that*, they let the little people in.

Why had everyone waited so long in the cold? Simply because at Cannes, unlike anywhere else, the act of waiting justifies what you are waiting for, and deepens your need to get there. I wandered around town for two full days in a tuxedo, feeling like the world's most underused gigolo, for no other reason than to smooth my path into screenings of films from which I would normally run a mile. The festival is a mess, but its arousal of expectation approaches the status of high art. No movie is as good as the one showing tomorrow at eight-thirty in the morning, although by ten-thirty you'll be wondering why you bothered to wake up. This year, most of the interesting stuff—Atom Egoyan's "The Sweet Hereafter"; "L.A. Confidential," with Kevin Spacey—was

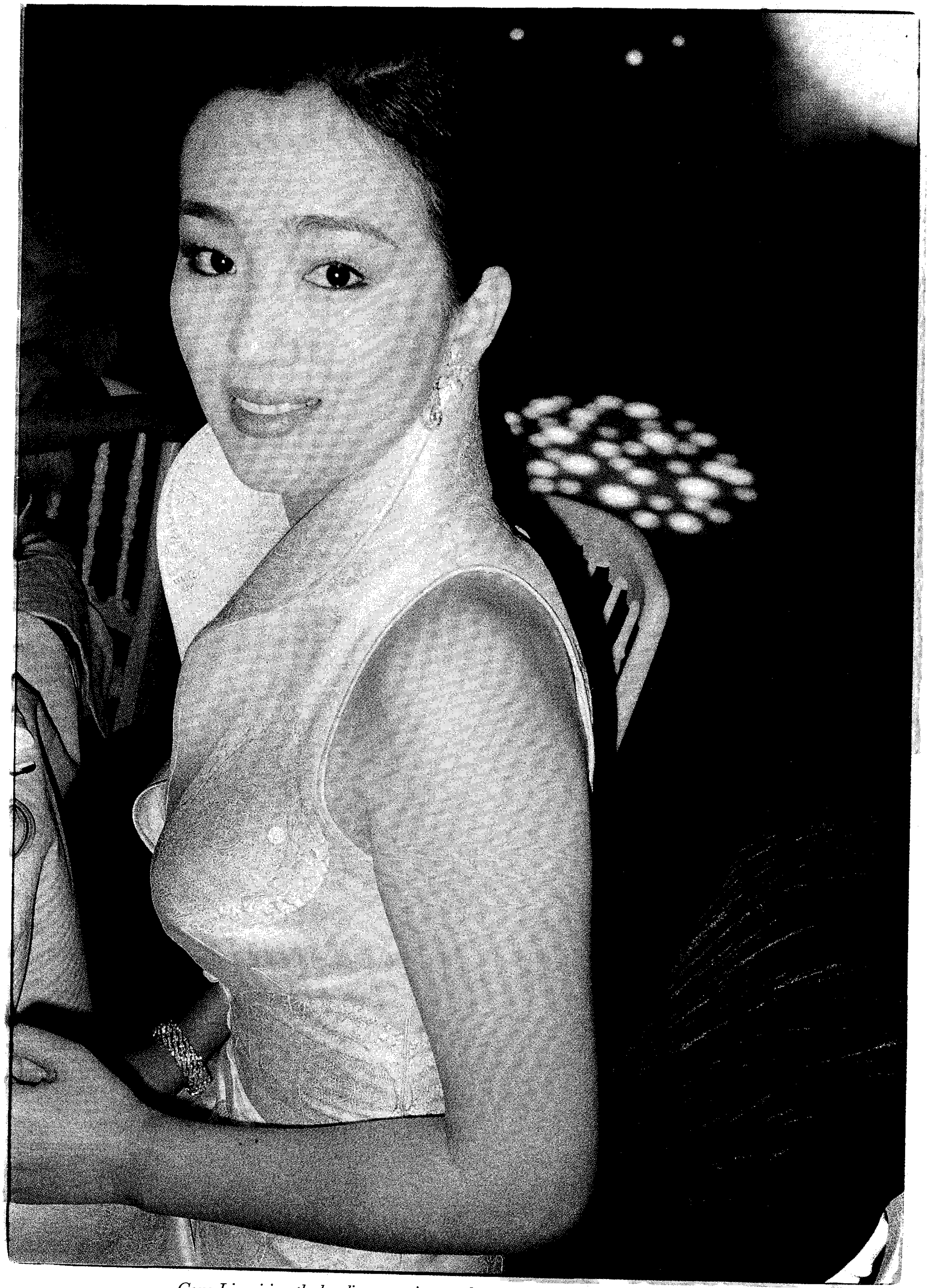
PORTFOLIO BY FRANÇOIS-MARIE BANIER



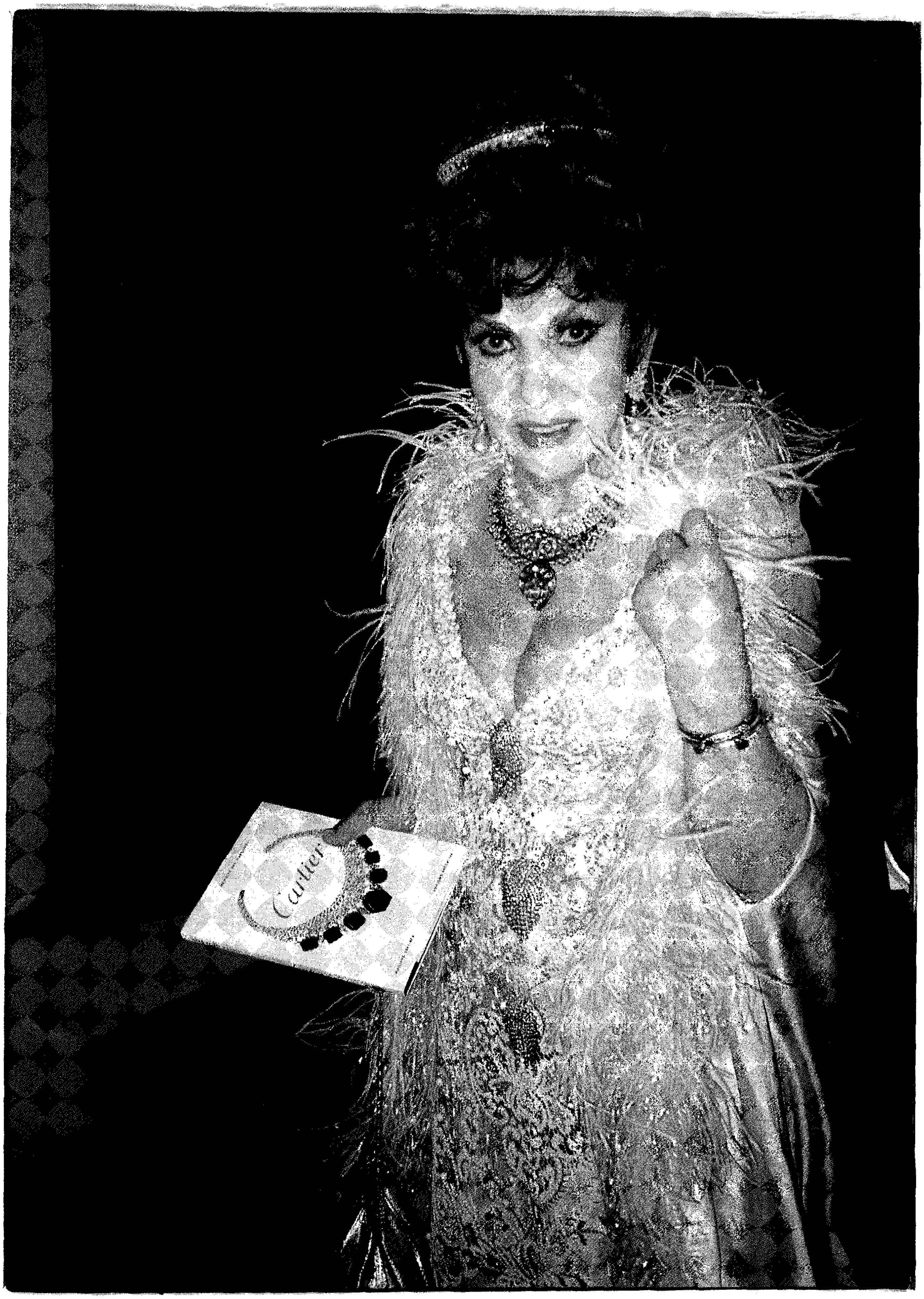
Red-carpet walk: Johnny Depp on the way to "The Brave," his début feature as a director.



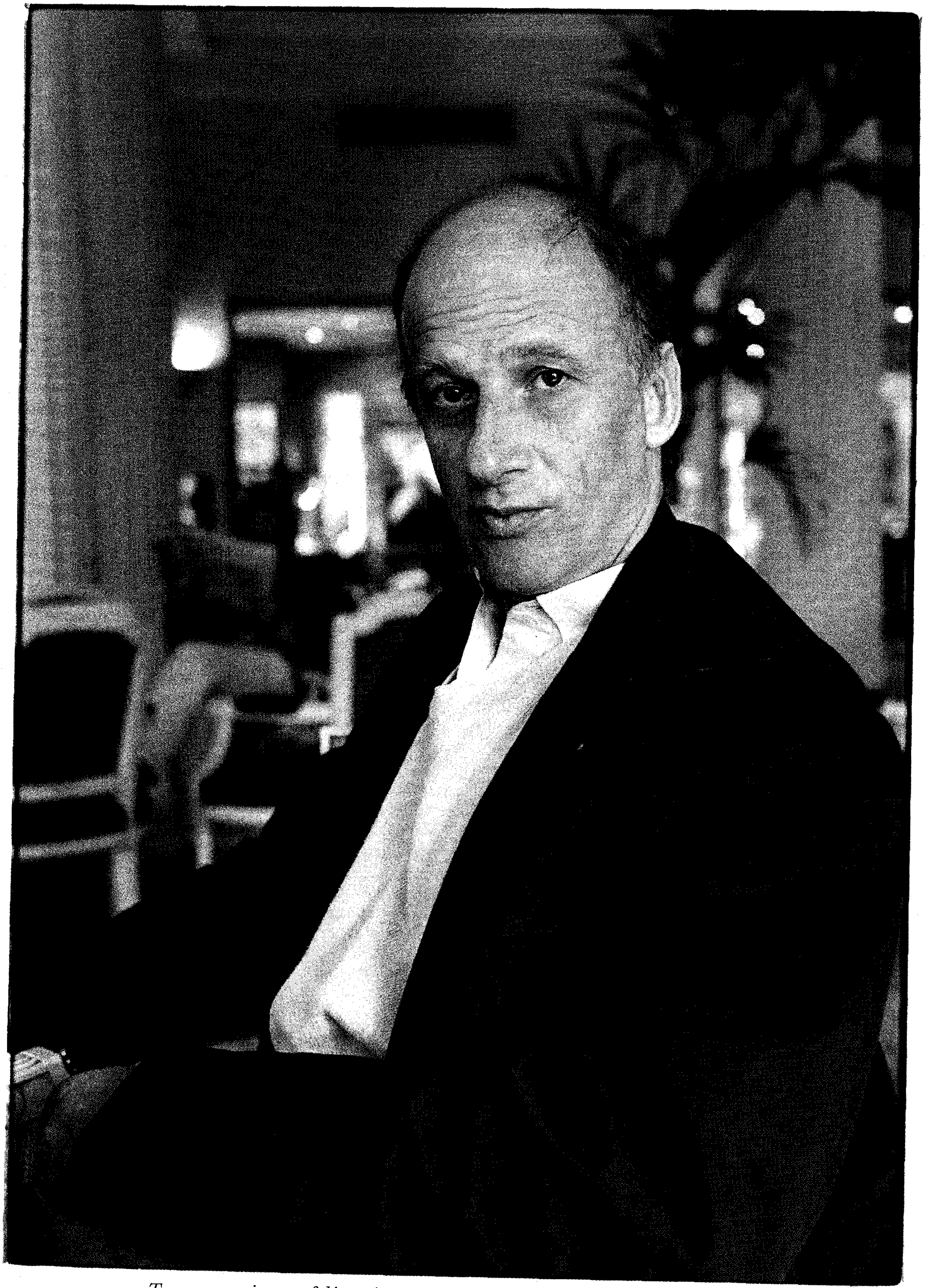
Partygoers in the courtyard of the Hotel Carlton, with Anjelica Huston and Robert Graham bringing up the rear.



Gong Li, raising the loveliness quotient at the opening-night "Fifth Element" bash.



One of the lucky ones: Gina Lollobrigida, with a coveted Cartier invitation to the Fiftieth Anniversary Gala.



Too many movies: one of this year's festival jurors, the theatre and opera director Luc Bondy.

The Great Outdoors in Style

TIMBERHILL Ranch

A Unique Country Resort in Northern California

"Quiet, simple luxury—" Town and Country

RELAIS & CHATEAUX

800-847-3470 · www.timberhillranch.com

Celebrating 50 Years of Barefoot Fun in the Sun

6 & 13 day Caribbean Adventures from $650.

For information call your travel agent or

1-800-327-2601

Windjammer Barefoot Cruises LTD.

P.O. Box 190-120 · Dept. 38 · Miami Beach, FL 33119

CAMINO TOURS

Spain by Bike • Spain by Foot

Call 800-938-9311 for catalog

Publish Your Book

75-year tradition of quality. Subsidy book publisher offers publishing services for books of all types. For *Author's Guide* write or call Dorrance—YORK, 643 Smithfield, Pittsburgh, PA 15222 or 1-800-695-9599.

Maine, Music and a Touch of Magic!

A UNIQUE LAKESIDE RESORT

Quisisana

Superb food, tennis, golf and watersports. Musical performances nightly. *Seen on CBS Sunday Morning!*

On Lake Kezar · Center Lovell, ME 04016 (207) 925-3500

French Holiday Rentals

Experience *la vraie France* in your own chateau, cottage or farmhouse. Weekly or monthly rentals. All regions.

Call (510) 559-8080 or write
2124 Kittredge St, Suite 200
Berkeley, CA 94704

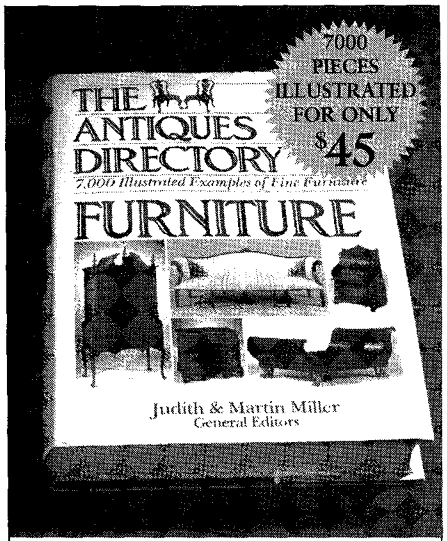
VILLE ET VILLAGE

squashed into the second half of the festival, so that you could spend the first half getting itchy. The quintessential Cannes fortnight, indeed, would involve no films at all—just invitations to parties that never happen and rumors of films that will never be made. On the principle that foreplay sells better than sex, Miramax showed half an hour of "Copland," starring Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, Ray Liotta, and—hang on—Sylvester Stallone. It looked great: better than most of what was shown in competition, and quite possibly better than the finished product, which is due to arrive in August. "Copland" was the cinematic equivalent of festival food, which not only leaves you hungry for more but is designed to prove that the human constitution can survive on a diet of pure canapé.

Socially, this unsatisfied craving translates into outright madness. If any party was hotter than the one to which you couldn't find an invitation, it was the party that you missed the night before. The latest twist, courtesy of the folks at MTV, was to issue an excess of tickets to their soirée, thus insuring the presence of a baying mob at the gates. On Monday night, I went to the New Line party for ten minutes, stepped out to make a phone call, and then spent an hour and a half trying to get back in. Unlike the rest of the throng, I knew what lay inside: a chance to sip warm wine from plastic cups and scream small talk over the sound of the Pimp Daddies. Yet still I stood in line, with a chunky German couple pressing lightly against my kidneys, and with no hope of getting a cab home, because that is what you do. Eventually, I hooked up with Nicholas Klein and Traci Lind, the writer and the supporting star, respectively, of the new Wim Wenders picture "The End of Violence." They were gracious, good-looking, honest about the strengths and weaknesses of their movie, and, above all, they had a *car*. Later, over a drink at the bar in the Hotel Martinez, I asked Traci if she minded all the hoopla. "Not hoopla," she corrected me. "Turbo-hoopla."

This year saw the traditional Cannes balance of chaos and fun tip dangerously into the red—unless, of course, you were a seasoned enjoyer, like James Woods. "Even the chaos was fun for a while," he said cheerily as we trooped onto the Airbus at Nice. "See any movies?" I asked. "Oh, no," he said. That explains it. He should have tried one of the afternoon press screenings, when film companies juice up the desirability of their products by showing them in a theatre the size of a squash court. The crowd trying to get into the new Abel Ferrara movie, "The Blackout," was more like an Abel Ferrara movie than the Abel Ferrara movie was. As the crush reached cattle-truck intensity, the woman in front of me fainted at my feet. It says a lot for my Cannes-contaminated soul that my first instinct was not to catch her as she dropped but to hail her genius at P.R. "Blackout!" I said to the guy next to me. "*Love* it," he replied. I finally remembered my manners, knelt down, and adopted the Rhett Butler position, but even now I wonder whether she was starting a fad. After all, the Riviera skies grew suspiciously tempestuous for the screening of Ang Lee's "The Ice Storm." As for the première of the Korean entry "Wind Echoing in My Being," I don't even want to think about it.

By comparison with the main contenders, in fact, the Korean films sounded promising. I was particularly sorry to have missed "Crocodile," from the director Kim Kee-Duck, in which "a woman wants to roll back her own history and an unknown man." What Kim didn't realize was: I am that man. At the Fiftieth Anniversary Gala, I was completely rolled back by the women who streamed up the red carpet, oozing history as if it were perfume. Just when you think you're immune to celebrity, along comes a genuine grande dame—Anouk Aimée, Claudia Cardinale, or Gina Lollobrigida—to lay you low. Gina, sadly, was without the fourteen chihuahuas who accompanied her to an earlier festival, but you can't have everything. It must be said that 1997, though a mixed year for films, was well over the limit on beauty. The president of the jury was Isabelle Adjani, who likes to lower her shades in the way that less retiring performers used to whip aside their tops on the beach. Among her fellow-jurors were Mira Sorvino and the radiant Chinese actress Gong Li; by way of compensation, there was also room for Tim Burton and Mike Leigh. I heard one French reporter refer to "*Gong et Mike Leigh.*" They would make a lovely couple. If any place can swing it for them, Cannes can. ♦



7000 PIECES ILLUSTRATED FOR ONLY $45
THE ANTIQUES DIRECTORY
7,000 Illustrated Examples of Fine Furniture
FURNITURE
Judith & Martin Miller
General Editors

"The most complete, authoritative and useful single-volume guide to antique furniture ever published..." The indispensable *Antiques Directory: Furniture,* has been almost impossible to find since its publication at $50 in 1985. Now for only $45, you can own this lavish new edition, updated to reflect current values. Edited by the experts behind the renowned annual *Miller's Antique Price Guide,* it is an encyclopedic and practical guide to the major periods and styles of antiques.

GUARANTEED to sharpen your eye and increase your knowledge of quality, value, authenticity, identification and style in antique furniture, or you may return it for a full refund.

- **Covers every major country's furniture styles, from the 16th to the 20th century**
- **7,000 photographs—560 in color, all fully captioned and price coded, from under $1,000 to over $100,000**
- **Over 100 short essays on everything from dating to restoration**
- **639 pages, 8" x 11", hardcover**

ALL ORDERS MUST BE PRE-PAID.
CREDIT CARD ORDERS: CALL TOLL FREE
800-411-7354
or send your name and address with check or money order for $45*, plus $4.50 for shipping and handling, to:
The Condé Nast Collection
Box 10214, Dept. 455980-145
Des Moines, IA 50336

*PLEASE ADD SALES TAX IN CA, CO, GA, IA, IL, KY, MA, MI, NJ, NY, OH. ALLOW UP TO 4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY.

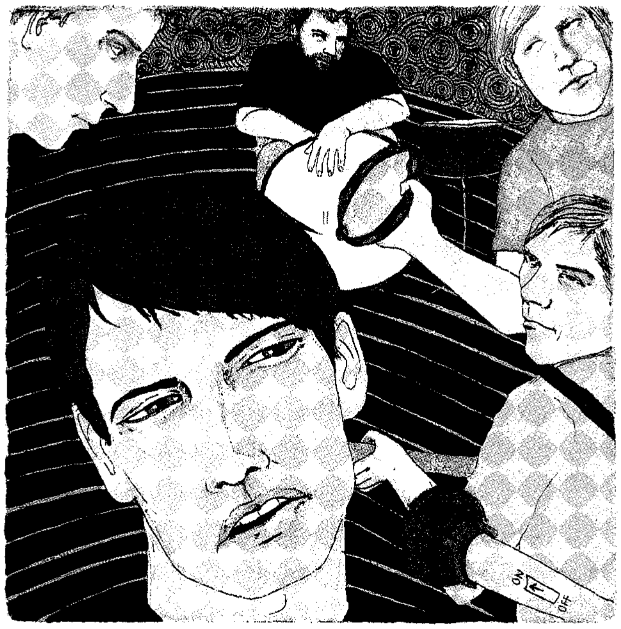
MUSICAL EVENTS

THE PAVEMENT TAPES

How a rock band became famous for lyrics that make no sense.

BY ALEX ROSS

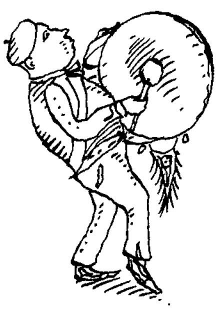
At least one long and winding road to Hell is paved with interpretations of rock lyrics. Writing on the subject falls apart because lyrics make less sense to the eye than to the ear. Words are blurred and bent by the music that swirls around them. "A song doesn't exist to convey the meaning of the words," the critic Simon Frith has written. "Rather, the words exist to convey the meaning of the song." A Cambridge psychologist once found that if a singer deliberately switches from ordinary words to nonsense syllables in the middle of a song only a few people hear anything amiss. Any singer who has suffered a memory lapse can corroborate this. When singers write the songs themselves, as rock singers have often done since Bob Dylan and the Beatles, the proportion of obscure lyrics naturally creeps up; the same nonsense syllables that cover memory lapses can cover writer's block. In any case, rock loves nonsense, and it has evolved new dialects outside everyday language. There's vacant, joyous nonsense ("Doo-wah-diddy," "Gabba gabba hey"), vacant, shadowy nonsense ("I am the walrus," "Here come the warm jets"), and nonsense that declares war on reality ("The sun's not yellow, it's chicken").


Stephen Malkmus, with members of Pavement: a band with a slacker-genius aura.

LARA TOMLIN

Nonsense needles the ear with possible meanings. Sometimes there's really nothing there: nonsense syllables are prized for their rhythmic pounce (rock's response to scat singing), or words are treated as pure sound. For example, the mysterious refrain heard in Dylan's "Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands"—"My warehouse eyes, my Arabian drums"—seems like an excuse for a cascade of long vowels, inseparable from the regal sweep of the melody. Rock songs tend to be written backward, in terms of the old Tin Pan Alley production line: a guitar riff dictates the shape of words to come. And since the voice competes against guitars, lyrics may amount to little more than a few strong phrases that are pitched to the audience through the blur. Michael Stipe, of R.E.M., whose lyrics have caused trouble for fans who listen too closely, sticks words into structures that are already half worked out by Peter Buck and the rest of the band: often he simply strings together sonorous phrases that he's collected here and there.

The syndrome of rock-lyric interpretation begins in earnest on records. Listening at home, fans pick out details that disappear in live shows; they also add oddities of their own. (In 1965, Dylan's already obscure warning about the "mystery tramp . . . not selling any alibis" was misheard as "mystery trend," and a San Francisco band started up under that name.) Rock artists have perfected a tease with meaning: one song fires off a plain-as-day message of love or loss; another speaks in riddles. At their best, the riddles echo the eerie image-making of blues and folk, ancient evangelical ramblings, and other traces of what the critic Greil Marcus calls "the old, weird America." In his new book, "Invisible Republic: Bob Dylan's Basement Tapes," Marcus searches for the origins of the topsy-turvy folk-rock songs that Dylan recorded with the Band in 1967. One of his examples is this Appalachian lyric as sung by Clarence Ashley: "Gonna build me log cabin on a mountain so high / So I can see Willie when he goes on by." It's one of those familiar-seeming lyrics that turn strange at second glance. Why a log cabin? Who is Willie? You see some devilish scene and jerk back with a start.



It's safe to say that no rock band has ever come to the fore without doing something exceptional with its lyrics. And most bands that achieve long-playing immortality play around gaps in ordinary language. But nonsense is a tricky game on a vast public stage; it risks misunderstanding, and also understanding. After a million revolutions of the turntable, fans may trade in mysteries for dull meanings. When the commercial machinery of music is so lethally quick at labelling and packaging anything spontaneous, strange, or inexplicable, it may not be surprising that one hugely gifted band of the nineties has retreated farther up the mountain of nonsense than almost any before it. What kind of rock stars could go on MTV singing, "I'm an island of such great complexity"?

MYSTERIOUS vinyl records marked "Pavement" began showing up at a few offbeat stores, radio stations, and magazines at the end of the nineteen-eighties. Pavement was evidently the name of a band from Stockton, California; nothing else was known. Collegiate and postcollegiate music fanatics were fascinated by every feature of the band's makeshift promotion: the hard, enigmatic name, the record jackets à la Anselm Kiefer, the Edison-cylinder scratchiness of the sound. The music burrowed through the dense, dissonant textures that were fashionable in eighties underground rock, then took flight in stately melodies that smacked of a sunbaked suburb and a refined pop-record collection. A flat-toned voice sang lyrics that sometimes touched on suburban discontent but more often drifted into unanalyzable abstraction. "Life is a forklift," went the song "Forklift." "Now my mouth is a forklift. This I ask, that you serve as a forklift too." What did it mean? No one had any idea. That was the beauty of it. Pavement was credited to "SM, Spiral Stairs, and G. Young"; it looked to be some kind of dangerous Dadaist cult.

When the band first toured the East Coast, in 1991, I went along with a crowd of indie-rock obscurantists to find out who SM, Spiral Stairs, and G. Young might be. One friend of mine had heard that G. Young was a reclusive Pynchonesque genius who had hired teen-agers to play his rock compositions. We looked around for this mastermind but saw only a drunken hippie drummer—Gary—throwing cabbage at the audience and flailing on all sides of the beat. Handsome-nondescript California guys in their twenties turned out to be the real agents of Pavement. They were obviously pleased with the hubbub they had created, yet they refused to play anything like the detached, driven music on the records. Thanks in part to Gary, they essentially murdered their songs. The effect was comic but also confrontational: the band seemed to be trying to drive its new audience away.

Pavement entered the scene during the "grunge hype" that followed the success of Nirvana; major labels were signing every kind of guitar band. Pavement turned down big-money offers and remained with the independent label Matador. From that perch, it began taunting bigger bands and feeding gibberish to the music press. Several magazines printed a tale about Pavement auditioning to appear on "Beverly Hills 90210" and getting into a fistfight with the teen idol Jason Priestley. Scott Kannberg, the band's rhythm guitarist and manager, continued to give his name as Spiral Stairs. Stephen Malkmus, the lead singer and lead guitarist, was asked to explain lyrics and made them twice as obscure. (Pavement had a small hit in 1994 with the song "Cut Your Hair," which seemed to be about the rock business and its emphasis on "career, career." Malkmus insisted to one critic that he was actually singing "Korea! Korea!" and foresaw a nuclear conflict with that nation.)

In the last few years, Pavement has eased up on its provocations. Gary is gone. Steve West is the drummer, with Bob Nastanovich switching between percussion and background noises. Mark Ibold plays athletic bass lines. The three guitars race every which way and then balletically intersect. Over four albums, Pavement's sound has become more tuneful and playful, cruising through thirty years of rock history and wandering into country and jazz. Its crisp-sounding new album, "Brighten the Corners," was produced by Mitch Easter, who recorded early R.E.M. Its live act has become more focussed and extroverted, if a show in New York last week was any indication. The band is almost famous: rock critics adore it; unruly novelists like Dennis Cooper and Bret Easton Ellis admire it; cultists catalogue it on the Internet; other bands copy it. (When the Brit-pop band Blur adopted what it called a Pavementish style, it had its first major American hit.) Yet Pavement still has a relatively low commercial profile. The question always hanging over this band is whether it should be "bigger"—and, not coincidentally, whether its lyrics should be simpler.

IT'S Malkmus who writes most of the sublime nonsense that gives Pavement its slacker-genius aura. He's about thirty and looks a bit like Kyle MacLachlan in "Blue Velvet." I don't know him, but I know people who resemble him—people who are strikingly intelligent but make a point of avoiding career paths that reward intelligence as a matter of course. Malkmus has chosen a line of work in which intelligence can become a liability. Lead singers are supposed to be dumb and woozy, like Liam Gallagher, of Oasis. Malkmus aims at writing rock songs with history and poetry in them. He has a gift for coining phrases that sound like points in a missing manifesto or like slogans for a movement yet to be named: "The South takes what the North delivers"; "Between here and there is better than either here or there"; "Praise the grammar police." But no phrase really connects with the next, and Malkmus's little orations turn cryptic or comic. Although Michael Stipe and Beck, among others, play similar free-association games, Malkmus stands apart for his peculiarly jagged word choice and for the mad consistency of his method. As other rock auteurs work toward concept albums, he's still reluctant to write a concept song.

Malkmus found his voice as a songwriter in "Summer Babe," the first track on the 1992 album "Slanted and Enchanted." This song has exactly the swaggering, classic-rock sound that the title leads you to expect: Kannberg's guitar strides forward, Malkmus's voice lilts up and down, everyone's having fun. It's such a grand come-on that the words probably register only in the corner of your ear: something about waiting forever for a summer babe. Listening again, you find that the clichés you thought you heard aren't there. "She waits there in the levee wash, mixing cocktails with a plastic-tipped cigar," Malkmus has been singing. "Minerals, ice deposits daily drop off your first shiny robe. . . . Yooouuu're my summer babe." Your classic-rock song has been hijacked by surrealists. Malkmus sings it with such cool passion that the irrational lyrics somehow flow as nostalgically as the conventional lyrics they seem to have replaced.

Despite its surface beauty, Pavement's new album is even more manic in its mind games. Malkmus's voice is closely recorded, and in several songs he half sings, half speaks in a style that falls somewhere between jazzy rap and talking blues. So you can't overlook the fact that the first track, "Stereo," begins with the inscrutable words "Pigs they tend to wiggle when they walk; the infrastructure rots, and the owners hate the jocks, with their agents and their dates." A few moments later, the topic, so to speak, has switched to the falsetto croon of the lead singer of Rush—"What about the voice of Geddy Lee? How did it get so high? I wonder if he speaks like an ordinary guy?" A band mate chimes in, "I know him, and he does!" Malkmus answers, "Well, you're my fact-checking cuz." The idea that such a song could have its own fact-checking department is Pavement's best joke since the Jason Priestley hoax. "Stereo" culminates in the amped-up, delirious refrain "Listen to me! I'm on the stereo! Stereo!" Heard on the radio, the song seems to be celebrating its unexpected arrival there, on wings of nonsense.

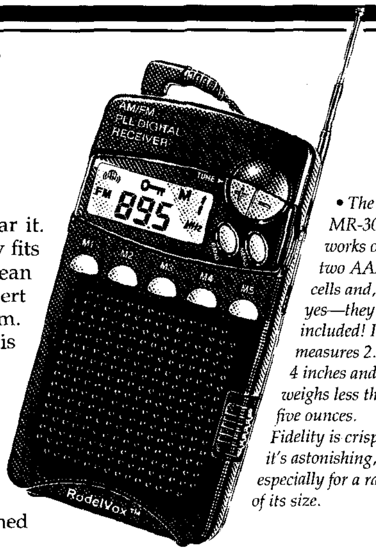
Sometimes Malkmus is apparently seeking out words that can't have appeared together in rock songs before. In "Type Slowly" he sings the phrases "excruciatingly gray," "leather terrarium," and "Lady, I am no futurist." More often, his choices have musical logic behind them. He pins his lines to classic rhythms—for example, Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode" pattern, with the "Goode" falling between beats two and three. Malkmus invents ever odder combinations of words to fire up this old syncopation. "Shady Lane," the catchiest song on the new album, has a gentle, hypnotic melody that keeps slipping off the beat and then falling back into line. Two Johnny B. Goode-like phrases that cause slippage are "emery board" and "worlds collide." In another song Malkmus sings, "I vent my spleen at the Lord / He is abstract and bored"; this has the same rhythmic contour as, say, Grand Funk Railroad's "We're an *American band*." Even if the words don't cohere, meanings emerge. "Shady Lane" suggests a calm refuge in a crazy world, with the meaning really taking shape in the texture of the music (losing the beat, finding it again).

A Pavement album is a series of small labyrinths. The pleasure of the maze matters more than finding a way out. After many repetitions, the strangeness of the language remains; at the same time, the lyrics mesh with the music in ways that make nearly every word sound natural and exact. The band plays the same trick over and over, so far without exhaustion: weird words decay into infectious music. Pavement has found its place in the pop landscape and has refused to move an inch. It protects its core of mystery, which is also a kind of blazing innocence. ♦

A whole new world of listening pleasure with...

MR-307A PLL Digital AM/FM Radio by RodelVox™ Only $59.95*

But read this ad for an even better deal!



You won't believe it until you actually hear it. Here is a radio so small that it comfortably fits into your shirt pocket; but it has sound so clean and so crisp that you'd think you were in a conert hall or listening to an elaborate sound system. Here are some of the other great features of this break-through receiver:

- PLL Synthesized Tuning
- Built-in Speaker
- High-Impact Case
- State-of-the-Art Technology
- 10 Memory Presets
- Stereo Earphones
- Stereo Phone Jack
- Stereo/Mono Switch
- Key-Lock Function
- Batteries Included
- Telescope Antenna
- Last-Tuned Station Retained

• The MR-307A works on two AAA cells and, yes—they are included! It measures 2.5 x 4 inches and weighs less than five ounces. Fidelity is crisp; it's astonishing, especially for a radio of its size.

We are the exclusive importers of *RodelVox*™ audio equipment in the United States and are therefore able to bring you this exceptional receiver at the great price of just $59.95. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for just $119.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Get most advanced technical features, "shirtpocket" AM/FM reception as you never had before, and enjoy a whole new world of listening pleasure. Order your *MR-307A PLL Digital AM/FM Receiver by RodelVox™ today!*

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 797-7367
24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week.

Please give order **#1001C834.** We need daytime phone # for all orders. Add $4.95 standard shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for CA delivery). You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

For customer service and wholesale orders call 415-543-6675. We can apply your company logo to this radio on minimum quantities of 100 units.

since 1967
haverhills®
185 Berry Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

START FIGHTING SKIN CANCER NOW!

Lt. Khaki
White
Navy

Andrew's Sun Hat

Recommended By Dermatologists

Excellent Protection • Great Looking • Light Weight • Poly/Cotton • 4" Front Brim–2 1/2" Back & Sides Shades side of face & back of neck • Cool

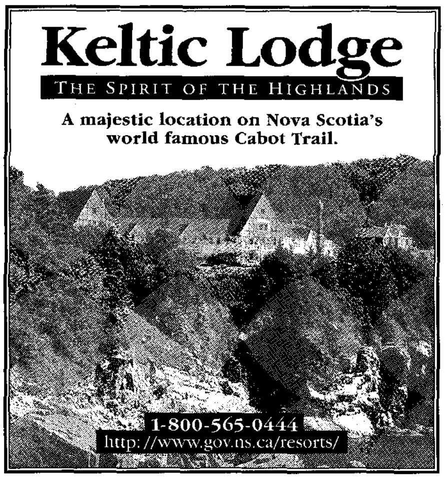
Sizes: S (6 3/4-6 7/8); M (7-7-1/8); L (7 1/4-7 3/8); XL (7 1/2-7 5/8); XXL (7 3/4-8)

Price: $23.00 + $5.00 shipping per order.

(423) 886-5189 with MC or Visa
Send Check or Money Order to:

Andrew Thompson Co., Dept. N-2
843 Arden Way, Signal Mtn, TN 37377

FINE GOODS Andrew Thompson Co. of Chattanooga


Keltic Lodge

THE SPIRIT OF THE HIGHLANDS

A majestic location on Nova Scotia's world famous Cabot Trail.

1-800-565-0444
http://www.gov.ns.ca/resorts/

For the discriminating vacationer
a commitment to excellence

Kiawah Island
Rentals and Sales

Pam Harrington Exclusives
803-768-0273 *1-800-845-6966*

MURDER INK®

The world's oldest mystery bookstore.

2486 Broadway NYC 1 · 800 · 488 · 8123
FREE CATALOG

Stewart & Hunnisett
FINE EUROPEAN TOURING

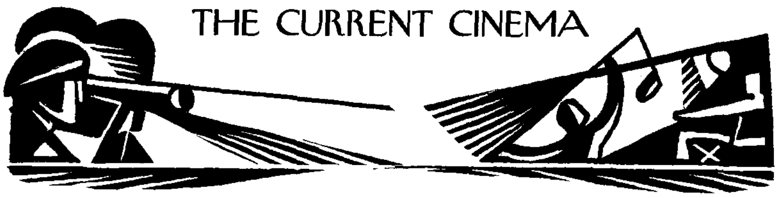
Tuscany

Enjoy the magnificent art, culture and natural beauty of this glorious region! We offer an exquisite week-long luxury tour. Very small groups. For a brochure please call or fax (212) 864-7840.

GALÁPAGOS

You, 9 other adventurers and our licensed naturalist will sail by yacht to explore more islands than any other Galápagos expedition. 60 trip dates. Machu Picchu option. Free brochure.

Inca Floats 510-420-1550
1311-Y 63rd St., Emeryville CA 94608



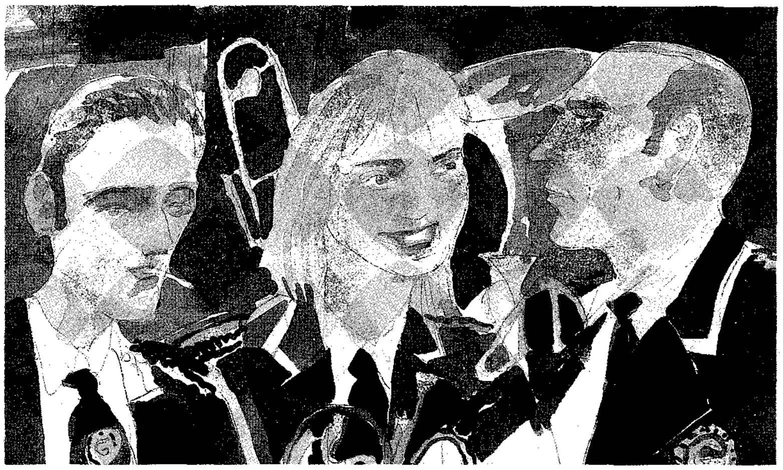
THE CURRENT CINEMA

BANDSTAND

The working-class wit of "Brassed Off" and "The Van."

BY ANTHONY LANE

"BRASSED OFF" is written and directed by Mark Herman, who has created an entertaining movie from fantastically unpromising material. The setting is Grimley, a colliery town in the North of England. Like many such towns, it has a brass band, but a brass band is pretty much all that it does have. The brass players are miners by profession, and the coal industry that supported the place is turning to dust. According to Danny (Pete Postlethwaite), who conducts the band, this imminent fate makes it more essential than ever to play on—to maintain a brave and melodious front while the rest of life runs out of breath. The opposing view, voiced by some of the lads, is that there's no point in fiddling, or blaring, while Rome burns. And thus, in the opening minutes of the movie, we hear the swell of its major theme: Does music matter? And, if not, what does?



Musical solidarity: Ewan McGregor, Tara Fitzgerald, and Pete Postlethwaite.

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

The debate on this issue, which threatens to wreck an afternoon's rehearsal, is resolved by the arrival of a new face—the only face worth staring at for miles around. It belongs to Gloria (Tara Fitzgerald), whose grandfather was a miner and a flugelhorn player. The good news is that she has inherited at least half of his talent: from the moment she moistens her lips and presses them to the mouthpiece, it's clear that everyone else in the band will dance to her tune. For a while, none of them know the bad news: Gloria is management. She is not a miner but a miner's foe, compiling a report for the company that plans to shut down the pit. By the time that her fellow brass player Andy (Ewan McGregor) discovers her dirty secret, it's too late, for he has already fallen in love with her. The love itself is a mush-free zone, brisk and direct: when he walks her back home after dinner, she asks him up for coffee. "I don't drink coffee," he replies. "I haven't got any," she says, not missing a beat.

The thrust of this conversation is up-to-date, and the accents are broad Yorkshire, but the basic rhythm is American screwball. Here, as elsewhere, Herman is fighting a tradition of comic laziness: his main achievement is to extend the cramped setting of his story into areas of feeling that are anything but provincial. This is not often the case with British filmmaking; in most Ealing comedies, for instance, there is a cute neatness—as well as a consoling charm, which won't go away—in the matching of emotional to physical landscape, whereas the inhabitants of “Brassed Off” are forced to sustain their flagging souls by quickness of wit. This is a matter not so much of stoicism as of stylized defiance; you see it in a minor figure like Harry (the wonderfully lugubrious Jim Carter), whose daily exchanges with his wife are miniature masterpieces of noncommunication, or even more clearly in Phil (Stephen Tompkinson), Danny’s lumbering son, whose efforts to keep his family fed involve strapping himself into clown gear and earning a few extra pounds at children’s parties. In his own stirring words, “There’s always Mr. Chuckles.”

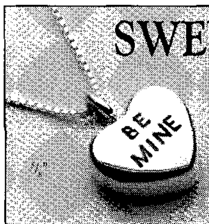
The problem with “Brassed Off” is that, about an hour into the movie, Mr. Chuckles checks out. Instead of battling against the pit closure, Phil takes the cowardly (if logical) step of voting for a good redundancy payoff, and then reels from the guilt. His wife takes off with the kids; his dad falls sick, coughing up coal-black phlegm; his house is stripped of everything but a phone. This is a real test of the movie’s comic mettle, and Herman decides to play it dark; we have to watch as the kindly, big-jawed Phil tears off the mask of humor and starts to lambaste the Tory Party in the middle of a church. Even Danny, the one who believed in nothing but the band, turns his back on musical frivolity and makes a highly public declaration against the government. Most of what he says is quite true, but the *dramatic* truth is a different matter; I believe what Phil and Danny are saying, but I’m not convinced, on the evidence of the movie so far, that they would actually say it. There are strong precedents for such a volte-face; Preston Sturges audiences are traditionally split between those who admire “Sullivan’s Travels” for lecturing them on the need to laugh and those who consider the very idea of a lecture to be no laughing matter. In the same way, you can either hook up to Herman’s political wrath or, like me, sigh at the spectacle of a film that disowns its own sense of fun.

Still, while the fun lasts, it rolls along nicely. As the band moves from the local to the national brass-band finals, it’s easy to tell where the story is heading; no movie about musical competition is going to pass up the chance for a resolving chord. The odd thing is that the homely, insubstantial chatter that precedes these moments of crisis, or of triumph, is less sentimental than the moments themselves. You get a more staunch and unshowy demonstration of working-class solidity when wives dye their hair purple to match the band’s uniforms, or when husbands leer goofily at Tara Fitzgerald in her soft cream sweater (the perfect antidote to the coal face that normally confronts them), than when people stand up and blow their own trumpets. The most telling clash of all comes when someone calls Andy a scab for consorting with Gloria. Andy goes ape and demands a retraction. “You’re just a stupid fucker” is the reply. This is a movie full of stupid fuckers, and fond of them, and Andy is proud to lead the way. “That’s more like it,” he says.

“THE VAN” is taken from a novel by Roddy Doyle—the third such adaptation, following “The Commitments” and “The Snapper.” Once again, the tale unfolds in a suburb of Dublin, and once again it stars Colm Meaney, who has grown ruddier and more baffled with every installment. Larry, his character this time, has a wife who reads George Eliot and a daughter who does well on her exams, but Larry himself plays golf in the rain or takes the baby for a stroll. Salvation arrives in the shape of his pal, the beautifully named Bimbo (Donal O’Kelly). Having lost his job, Bimbo compensates by buying a lump of mobile rust, vaguely identifiable as a van. Their plan is to sell, in descending order, the following foodstuffs: fish, chips, burgers, and—in one accidental case of recycling—deep-fried diaper.

“The Van” is probably Doyle’s best book, but everything that gives it strength on the page—the way it circles around, going nowhere in particular, stirring a witchy brew of cackles and doom-mongering—leaves the movie looking curiously static. The director is Stephen Frears, who fired up “The Snapper,” but the kind of slutty joy that he developed in that movie is hard to find here. The action, such as it is, peaks in 1990, when Ireland enjoyed unforeseen success in World Cup soccer, but a film that derives much of its energy from a bunch of people leaping up and down in front of TV sets, and from Eric Clapton plucking away sadly on the soundtrack, is in danger of running a little low on energy. Still, the grim lighting, doughy faces, and nightmare clothes are superbly unslick; as for the burgers themselves, I just pray to God that they were special effects. ♦

Blenheim Ginger Ale
WE MAKE GINGER ALE
THE OLD FASHIONED WAY
SINCE 1903
NOW YOU CAN ORDER
our famous Ginger Ale
prepaid to any of the lower 48 states
for just $24.00 per case of 24/12 oz. bottles.
Specify #3 HOT, #5 NOT AS HOT
or #9 DIET (or will mix)
NOT FOR TIMID PALATES !
Write to: Blenheim Bottlers
Box 452, Hamer, SC 29547
or call: 1-800-270-9344
AMX/DISCOVER/VISA/MC

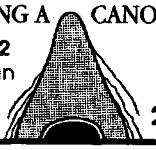


SWEET HEART
James Breakell's pretty pendant with 18" chain. Sterling silver $30; 14k Gold $195. Add $4 handling. Catalog available (800)767-6411.
J.H. Breakell & Co.
132 Spring St., Dept. NYSH, Newport, RI 02840

HOME FROM HOME in LONDON
Private Flats & Houses for Short Rentals
TOLL FREE: 1-800 748 9783
TEL: 011-44 171 584 8914 FAX: 823 8433
E-Mail: homefromhome@compuserve.com
Internet: www.homefromhome.co.uk

Wüsthof-Trident 7" Cook's
~~$90~~ $59 plus S&H
FREE Catalog of Great Savings
Incredible selection of fine cutlery, cookware and other chef's essential tools.
(800) 859-6994 ext. ny75
Professional Cutlery Direct

For over 100 summers, upholding the traditions of hospitality and leisure on the coast of Maine.
The Claremont Hotel
Brochure P.O. 137
SW Harbor, ME 04679
1-800-244-5036



THE POKE BOAT®
IT'S EVERYTHING A CANOE ISN'T.
It weighs only 22 pounds. You can buy more than a canoe.
606-986-2336

SHOUTS & MURMURS

THE POTOROO PRINCIPLE

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

I'VE thought for a long time about the best way to say that I'm in favor of eradicating all the cats in Australia. From the moment this issue presented itself, I understood that a barefaced statement of support for extermination was not the best way to go. I know that cat lovers—and I say this without meaning to be in any way critical—can be rather sensitive. I know this from personal experience. A few years ago, I managed to offend a number of cat lovers with a single sentence that most other readers presumably took no particular note of: "When I kick at a cat, it's nearly always for good reason."

After I received some rather strongly worded mail about that sentence, I offered what I believe was a very satisfactory explanation to those who might have interpreted it as revealing hostility or animus: I said that it had been taken out of context. Even so, there are people who have carried on a relentless campaign ever since to portray me as an enemy of the cat.

To show you the family heartache that such a campaign can cause—and to give you some sympathy for public figures who are painted with a broad brush in the press simply because they may have cheated on their wives or lied to their colleagues or fiddled a bit with tax-free donations—one of my own little daughters once looked up at me with tears in her eyes and said, "Daddy, why do you hate cats?"

Well, all right, she didn't have tears in her eyes, and, yes, this was some years before the kicking-at-cats remark was criticized by cat lovers, but you get the picture.

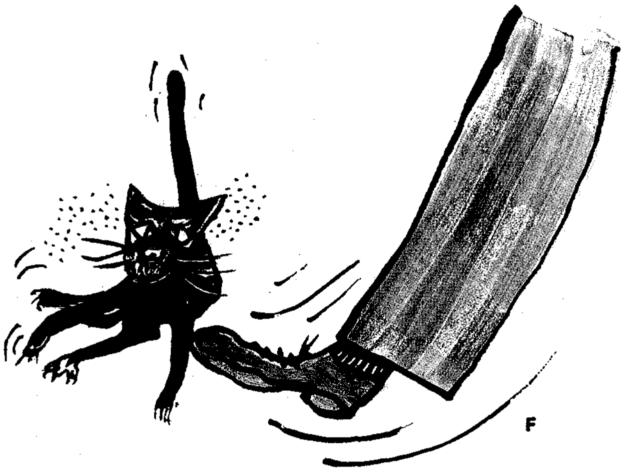
I dried the tears of that sweet little girl, and said, "I don't hate cats, honey. Hating cats would be prejudice, and Mommy and I have tried to bring you up to oppose prejudice wherever you encounter it. What might be fair to say is that I have never met a cat I liked."

So I thought that I should probably say right away that, since I have never met an Australian cat, it remains perfectly possible that there are plenty of them I'd like. I should also say that when I read a front-page *Times* story some time ago in which Richard Evans, a member of the Australian Parliament, was quoted as saying, "I am calling for the total eradication of cats in Australia," I didn't respond by shouting "Now you're talking!" or "Atta way to go, Dickie-boy!" I responded by examining the case on its merits.

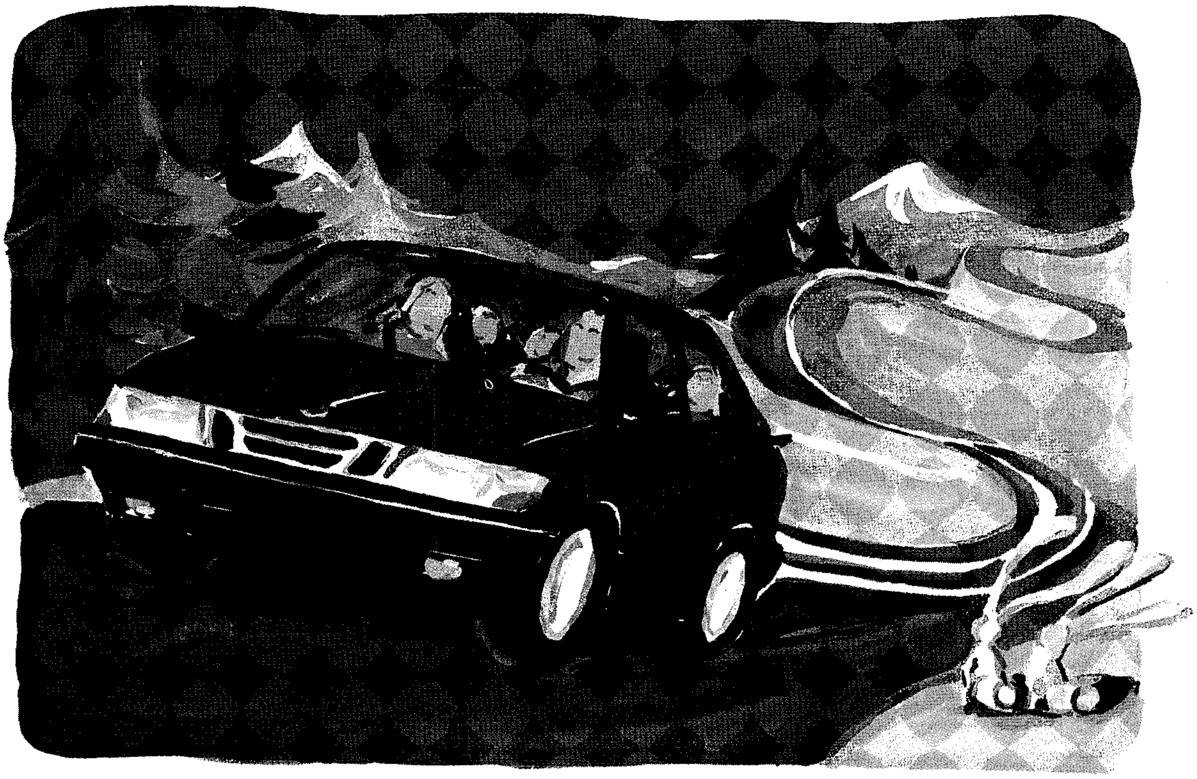
Not just Evans but many Australian conservationists are concerned that cats, particularly an estimated twelve million stray cats that have become wild, are driving into extinction any number of "small creatures whose evolution has not taught them that cats are their enemy"—creatures like the pig-footed bandicoot and the brush-tailed bettong and the rufous hare-wallaby, not to speak of any number of woylies and boodies and numbats and potoroos.

"Cats are responsible for thirty-nine species being either extinct, locally extinct or near extinct in Australia," Evans told the *Times*. So how is Australia to protect the wondrous array of exotic marsupials that constitute part of its national heritage? Could twelve million feral house cats be trained through a government program to rethink the way they respond to a pig-footed bandicoot when they come across one in the outback? Could they be trained to nurture rather than claw the heart out of a rufous hare-wallaby? No, I reluctantly decided. Cats, as cat lovers are always proud to tell us, defy training.

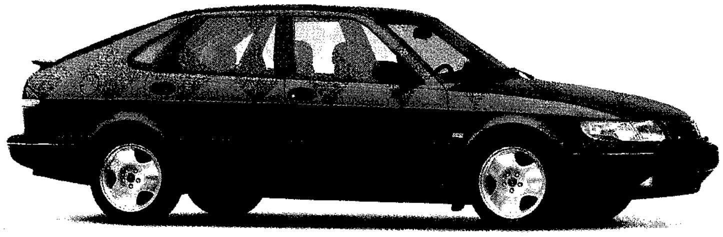
So, Mr. Evans proposes, Australians should simply neuter pet cats and spread feline diseases in the wild. That would eradicate cats by 2020. I'd prefer to put it another way. I'd prefer to say that by 2020 we could save the rufous hare-wallaby from extinction. I think my daughter would be proud to hear that her daddy is supporting efforts to save the rufous hare-wallaby. If she heard that, maybe she'd stop sniffling.



And, you might ask, what if a cat or two gets away and an Australian conservationist who's out for a stroll spots one about to pounce on a cuddly little potoroo and tear it limb from limb? The conservationist would simply kick at the cat, for good reason. ♦



Shouldn't the family chauffeur have some fun?



Find your own road.®

900 SE Turbo 5-door

The Saab 900 proves having kids and having fun aren't mutually exclusive. It can get your juices going 60 mph in 6.9 seconds.* Yet coddle a family of five in the most combined passenger/cargo space in its class.** And shelter them in a patented Safeseat construction and available integrated child seat. Is there any downside to this *Consumers Digest* "Best Buy" for the last four years?† Possibly. Family chauffeurs could squabble over whose turn it is.

SAAB

For more information about Saab, call **1-800-582-SAAB. Ext. 247.** **www.saabusa.com**

**Car and Driver,* 5/96. **Among entry luxury European sedans. Based upon data from charts in 1997 *Car and Driver Buyers Guide.* †1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997. ©1997 SAAB CARS USA, INC.

ABSOLUT RITTS.

ABSOLUT® VODKA. PRODUCT OF SWEDEN. 40 AND 50% ALC/VOL (80 AND 100 PROOF). 100% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. ABSOLUT COUNTRY OF SWEDEN VODKA & LOGO, ABSOLUT, ABSOLUT BOTTLE DESIGN, ABSOLUT CALLIGRAPHY AND ABSOLUTVODKA.COM ARE TRADEMARKS OWNED BY V&S VIN & SPRIT AB. ©1997 V&S VIN & SPRIT AB. IMPORTED BY THE HOUSE OF SEAGRAM, NEW YORK, NY. PHOTOGRAPH BY HERB RITTS.

THOSE WHO APPRECIATE QUALITY ENJOY IT RESPONSIBLY.